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Obama Urged To Appoint Reparations Commission

By Freddie Allen
Senior Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – In the wake of the mass murder of nine Black church members in Charleston, S.C. and the rash of unsolved fires at Black churches in the South, a coalition of Black groups are calling on President Barack Obama to issue an executive order to establish a "reparatory justice" commission.

"This is a moment in which you have to act and we believe that from Ferguson to Baltimore to Charleston and obviously before that there is an urgent need to ask why this keeps happening and to definitely have the kind of conversation and action to move the nation forward," said Ron Daniels, the president of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century (IBW) and the convener of the National African-American Reparations Commission (NAARC), a group of Black leaders that represent educational, health, advocacy and faith-based organizations.

Daniels said that the uprising in Baltimore triggered by the murder of Freddie Gray exposed the deep-seated isolation and racial disparities that exist in that city and other urban centers across the nation that clearly illustrate the ongoing impact of White supremacy in this country.

"It's not always people that are overtly hostile, sometimes people don't see and understand the plight of



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-- Ron Daniels

President of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century and the convener of the National African-American Reparations Commission

Black people," said Daniels.

White people look at things one way and Black people look at things a different way, said Daniels, adding that some White people simply don't understand the implicit bias that President Barack Obama addressed during his eulogy for Rev. Clementa Pinckney, the pastor of Emanuel A.M.E Church who was one of nine people shot to death during a Bible study at the church on June 17.

"There needs to be an aggressive approach by this country which does not deny or hide, but confronts and addresses the issues [affecting Black people] and provides the appropriate level of action and initiative for reparatory justice for people of African descent," said Rev. JoAnn Watson, a NAARC Commissioner and a former member of the Detroit City Council.

Watson said that the approach addressed in the request for a reparatory justice commission is long overdue, because many initiatives that have preceded the NAARC proposal have gone unfulfilled and unfinished.

Watson noted that Special Field Order Number 15, issued by General William T. Sherman in January of 1865 in an effort to secure 400,000 acres for freed slaves, was later rescinded by President Andrew Johnson following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. The Freedman's Bureau, formerly called the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, was created by Congress at the end of the Civil War to assist former slaves in the South in the aftermath of the war, was unceremoniously defunded and shuttered about seven years after the agency opened.

The commission seeks to address racial disparities in housing, public education and the criminal justice system through specific policy reforms and may also recommend additional funding for Black colleges and universities and a constitutional amendment to cement voters' rights.

In a letter to President Obama, the group called White supremacy and racism deadly diseases infecting the social, economic and political fabric of the nation.

"As you have related Mr. President, despite progress since the era of enslavement, Jim Crow and de facto discrimination/segregation, the 'badges and indicia' of the longstanding exploitation and oppression of people of African descent are reflected in the devastating disparities in health, education, housing, employment, economic development, wealth and incarceration rates which harm large numbers of Black people each and every day in this land of enormous prosperity," the letter said.

It continued, "Despite these realities, polls and studies indicate that a substantial number of White Americans fail to see or are in denial about the stubborn persistence of racism and its effects on Black people. In fact, there is a tendency to blame Blacks for the conditions our people find themselves in and/or to express 'racial resentment' of the perceived progress of Blacks, as being a function of encroaching on the success of Whites. Even among well meaning, sympathetic Whites, there is often a failure to recognize how implicit bias colors the countless decisions which constrain or kill the aspirations of Black people in this nation."

Instead of becoming more optimistic about race relations after the election of the nation's first Black president, a joint survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (PRC) and *USA Today* in August 2014 found that Black respondents have grown more pessimistic.

"Majorities of Blacks (64 percent) and Whites (75 percent) say the two races get along at least pretty well, though fewer blacks express this view than did so four years ago (76 percent)," a report on the survey said. "In 2007, 69 percent of Blacks said Blacks and Whites get along very well or pretty well."

In the same poll Black and White respondents expressed contrasting views on the performance of local police departments.

"Fully 70 percent of Blacks say police departments around the country do a poor job in holding officers accountable for misconduct; an identical percentage says they do a poor job of treating racial and ethnic groups equally.]," the survey respondents reported. "And 57 percent of African Americans think police departments do a poor job of using the right amount of force."

Just 27 percent of Whites said that police departments do a poor job holding officers accountable and 23 percent of Whites said that police forces do a poor job using the right amount of force.

Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of White respondents said that police officers do a good or fair

(Cont'd. On Page 2A)

Proposed Action Plan Will Bring Affordable Housing To Neighborhoods Across The City

On Monday, Seattle Mayor Ed Murray and Seattle City Councilmember Mike O'Brien unveiled an agreement that will lead to at least 50,000 new homes in Seattle, including 20,000 affordable homes, over the next 10 years.

"As Seattle expands and experiences rapid economic growth, more people are chasing a limited supply of housing. We are facing our worst housing affordability crisis in decades," said Murray. "My vision is a city where people who work in Seattle can afford to live here. Housing affordability is just one building block to a more equitable city. It goes hand in hand with our efforts on raising the minimum wage, providing preschool education for low-income children, and increasing access to parks and transit. We all share a responsibility in making Seattle affordable. Together, this plan will take us there."

At the heart of the action plan to make Seattle affordable is Mandatory Inclusionary Housing, a requirement that developers reserve five to seven percent of units in every new multifamily building to be affordable for residents earning up to 60 percent of King County's Area Median Income (AMI). Developers could opt to contribute to a fund for off-site construction of the units.

"Since 2013, the City Council has called for a robust, citywide, mandatory affordable housing program to help ensure that the people who work in this city can afford to live here," said O'Brien. "The combination of Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and a Commercial Linkage Fee will ensure that as Seattle continues to grow, we are creating housing for all incomes."

In 2015, 60 percent of AMI is $37,680 for an individual and $53,760 for a family of four. Current market-rate rents in new buildings on Seattle's Capitol Hill currently average $1,887. In 2015, individuals with incomes of 60 percent of AMI pay $1,008 for income-restricted apartments.

According to the agreement, new buildings will have taller height restrictions in existing multifamily residential, mixed-use and commercial zones throughout the city. A substantial portion of the additional development will occur within the existing Urban Centers and Urban Villages, designated two decades ago as the preferred location for denser housing. Only single-family zoning within Urban Villages and along major arterials will be converted to low-rise residential.

The action plan also includes a Commercial Linkage Fee on new commercial development, phased in over three years, to fund additional affordable housing for the lowest-income families. The linkage fee will range from $5 to $14 per square foot, based on the size and location of the commercial development.

When fully implemented, it is estimated that the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and the Commercial Linkage Fee will lead to the construction of at least 6,000 new affordable homes over 10 years.

After 10 months of work, the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) advisory committee delivered 65 recommendations to the mayor. The consensus-driven proposal was crafted by a 28-member committee of affordable housing advocates, community voices, developers and housing experts appointed by the mayor and Seattle City Council last September.

"We were asked by the mayor and council to offer bold, new concepts in our approach to solving the affordable housing crisis," said HALA co-chairs David Wertheimer and Faith Li Pettis. "We think this plan fully delivers on that request. We were able to complete our task because we approached the challenge with a single, shared goal: to make Seattle affordable for all families. None of us got exactly the solution we may have envisioned at the outset, and every one of us had to give a little to reach this landmark agreement."

According to the City, about 45,000 households in Seattle spend more than half their incomes on housing. An estimated 2,800 people sleep outside each night in Seattle. Currently, about 700 income-restricted homes are built in Seattle each year.

The increased development capacity across the city will ensure increase supply of housing to respond to growing demand, as Seattle is forecast to add 120,000 residents over the next 20 years.

Doubling of Housing Levy in 2016

To meet the needs of the Seattle's lowest-income residents, those earning less than 30 percent of AMI, HALA also proposes to double the existing $145 million Seattle Housing Levy scheduled to expire in 2016. Over the past 30 years, the levy has funded $400 million to build and preserve nearly 12,000 units of affordable housing.

In 2015, 30 percent of AMI is $18,850 for an individual or $26,900 for a family of four.

This year, the City will award a record $42 million from the Housing Levy and the existing Incentive Zoning program for the development and preservation of low-income housing. The Seattle Office of Housing will issue project guidelines and invite partner applications later this week.

The HALA report also urges the Washington State Legislature to allow Seattle to adopt a 0.25 percent real estate excise tax dedicated to affordable housing development, as well as an increase in the State Housing Trust Fund.

To support moderate-income families, HALA recommends expanding the Multifamily Property Tax Exemption Program (MFTE) that is set to expire at the end of the year. Under MFTE, developers receive a tax exemption when they dedicate 20 percent of units in new buildings for moderate-income people, typically between 65 percent and 85 percent of AMI. HALA proposes to expand the program to all areas where multifamily housing can be built and incorporate a new incentive for three-bedroom units to extend program benefits to larger moderate-income families.

In 2015, 80 percent AMI is $65,800 for a family of four.

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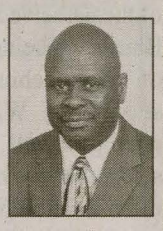
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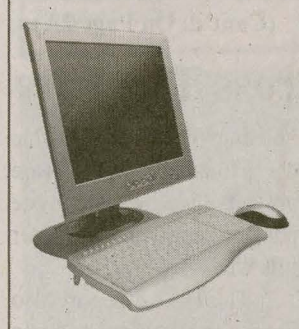
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Baltimore Prosecutor: Hardship Became Inspiration For Reform

By Natalie Pompilio
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - When Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby decided to run for her current office, she reached out to community activists, politicians and business leaders, eager to share her ideas. Almost all of them, she said, discouraged her from seeking election.


Marilyn Mosby

``I was told I was too inexperienced, that I couldn't raise enough money, that my decision to run could not only disrupt but potentially destroy my husband's political career,'' she recalled during a speech Sunday in Philadelphia. ``For me, as a young black woman, to run against an older white male incumbent, powerful, with the ability to raise close to a million dollars, the skeptics wanted to know: How could I have the audacity?''

It was a line that drew cheers from the largely female crowd of more than 500 people gathered at an NAACP empowerment forum, part of the organization's 106th annual convention. Mosby ignored the advice and was propelled to victory. At 35, she is the youngest chief prosecutor in any major American city.

``I tell you my story not to brag or to boast. I tell my story, I share my testimony, because I recognize that I got to where I am today not because of my own doing but because of the blood, sweat, tears and sacrifices of the audacious warrior women who have come before me, who lived their lives by example for all of us,'' she said.

Mosby was thrust into the national spotlight in April after 25-year-old Freddie Gray was arrested and suffered a spinal injury while being transported in a police van. He died a week later.

Residents took to the streets in protest for days afterward. Some of the demonstrations became violent and some protesters looted businesses and set fires. In response, the governor announced a citywide curfew and deployed the National Guard to Baltimore.

After a medical examiner ruled Gray's death a homicide, Mosby charged the six officers involved in Gray's arrest with felonies ranging from assault to murder.

During her speech Sunday, she shared personal stories of loss, including the shooting death of a beloved cousin when she was 14 that she said helped her turn her pain into her passion to reform the criminal justice system. She talked about setbacks, like when she was wait-listed at every law school she'd applied to and then failed the bar exam the first time she took it. She described how others had doubted her, sometimes causing her to doubt herself.

Overcoming those hardships were an important part of her story, she said, adding they're important parts of all stories and should be shared to inspire others.

``All too often, in our communities, when we feel we've obtained a level of success, we want people to see where we are and not how we got to where we are,'' she said. ``But we, as women, must cast our shame, our pride, our egos aside and continue to pass on our testimonies, our tried and tested journeys, to the generations coming behind us.''

Mosby ended by telling the crowd: ``Ladies, we have work to do and the time is now.''

Reparations Commission

Continued From Front Page

job treating racial and ethnic groups equally, but less than 30 percent of Blacks felt the same way.

In a statement, Kamm Howard, a leader of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA) and a member of the NAARC, said that an executive order creating the commission will help to re-frame the national discussion of reparatory justice around the international standards of full repair.

"This includes halting many discriminatory practices, efforts aimed at restoring and making whole our peoplehood, a variety of compensatory polices, dignity enhancing projects, programs and policies as well as various modalities that initiate healing from post-traumatic slavery syndrome and its many manifestations," said Howard.

Watson, the former Detroit City Council member, dismissed the idea that the sharp racial discrimination and animosity towards Blacks that sparked the Civil Rights Movement is a thing of the past.

"Black church burnings are occurring presently," Watson said. "The Charleston, S.C. massacre was in our present. That was not a lone gunman."

According to Watson, America has blood on its hands as a result of a subculture that has been allowed to ferment in the hands of the same people that continued to enslave Blacks for two and half years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

Instead of only turning to conversations about race during tragedies or sensational, ratings-driven stories in mainstream media, Daniels suggested that the commission could be the impetus for sustained, meaningful and fact-based conversations about race led by scholars, activists and community stakeholders in cities across the U.S. Now that the nation's attention is focused on race relations, Daniels said that it's time to systematically and seriously address "state of emergency in America's dark ghettos."

Watson agreed, adding that the commission should be established during President Obama's final years in office.

Watson said: "This is the appropriate time, the right place and an absolute opportunity for this nation to step up and fulfill the promises that have been made and not kept."

State Legislature Adjourns After Final Votes

By Rachel La Corte
Associated Press

(AP) - The Washington Legislature adjourned Friday after a marathon triple overtime session where lawmakers raised the gas tax to pay for transportation projects across the state, cut college tuition and put more money toward the state's education system.

Lawmakers went home Friday afternoon after the House passed its last remaining bills.

The House passed a transportation bonding measure on a 63-29 vote, and a transportation spending bill for projects across the state on a 61-30 vote. The two bills were the final two components of a $16.1 billion transportation revenue bill passed by the Legislature last week.

The chamber also moved a separate bill, on an 89-1 vote, that will delay a requirement for high school students to pass a high school biology exam for this year and 2016, which helps about 2,000 students at risk of not getting diplomas.

The votes came a day after the Senate took its final votes of the year, on both the graduation requirement delay, and a bonding bill tied to the state's $3.9 billion construction budget.

Senate action Thursday came following a weeklong standoff that threatened to blow a $2 billion hole in the $38.2 billion state operating budget signed by Gov. Jay Inslee last week.

That budget had assumed savings from the suspension of the voter-approved Initiative 1351, but a two-thirds vote of each chamber was required. The House easily passed the measure, but Senate Democrats, who were pushing for the graduation requirement delay, initially withheld their support and the measure failed on the Senate floor last week.

After more than a day of negotiations, Senate Bill 6145 was introduced Wednesday. It delays by two years, but does not eliminate, the requirement that students must meet the state standard on the science assessment. Students who did not walk with their graduating class this year, the first year the assessment was required, would still receive a diploma under the measure.

Lawmakers finished their work on their 176th day of session. They adjourned their regular 105-day session two days early at the end of April after encountering their first budget obstacles.

Governor Jay Inslee cited money for early learning, K-12 education, parks and raises for public employees as budget items he was proud of.

Lawmakers in the Democratic-controlled House and Republican-controlled Senate had struggled for months on the two-year state budget because of differing ideas on how to address a state Supreme Court mandate to put more money into the state's education system.

Democrats initially sought a new capital-gains tax, while Republicans insisted that no taxes were needed because of increasing state revenue. Ultimately, Democrats dropped the new tax idea, and Republicans agreed to close some tax exemptions.

The state budget spends an estimated $1.3 billion on K-12 basic education, and it phases in tuition cuts at the state's universities and colleges, as well as at community and technical colleges.

With the final votes on the transportation package, the plan, which includes an 11.9-cent increase in the gas tax over the next two years, now goes to Inslee for his expected signature.

The transportation plan would increase the gas tax in two stages: a 7-cent increase on Aug. 1 and a 4.9-cent increase on July 1, 2016.


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Othello Neighborhood Banners To Say Hello In 40 Languages Along MLK Way

During the first week of August new banners will appear along the light rail line above Martin Luther King, Jr. Way greeting passers-by in 40 different locally spoken languages. The banners will display the neighborhood logo O! hello Othello in 40 different languages. The Rainier Valley Festival Weekend, a Seafair sanctioned community event, will culminate Sun., Aug. 16 with the Othello Park International Music and Arts Festival (OPIMAF) featuring a procession to welcome new banners along Martin Luther King Way.



The Festival is an occasion for many ethnic groups of southeast Seattle to come together as one community and share gems of their various unique cultures. Besides booths, art projects, and music, the Festival emphasizes fun for children of all ages in the form of participatory dance, bouncy houses, games, in addition to the Park's playground facilities including Seattle's longest sliding board.

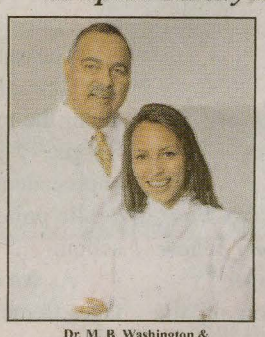
Neighbors have spent well over a decade planting and growing Othello's unique identity. In 1998, the Seattle City Council approved a neighborhood plan to develop a pedestrian friendly town center identity along the car oriented stretch of Martin Luther King Way between Holly Park and Brighton. The original version of the plan was called the MLK @ Holly Neighborhood Plan because there was no name for the whole neighborhood. Because it is difficult for a nameless place to have an identity, the neighborhood plan stewardship committee surveyed the citizenry to obtain their input into a name for the neighborhood. "Othello" emerged out of a long list of suggestions as the most popular contender.

Since then several neighborhood organizations have sprung up from Othello's grass roots to grow the now blooming concept of a neighborhood called Othello whose Link light rail station is the only one sitting at ground level in the heart of a business district with immediate access to local stores and restaurants.

On Board Othello (OBO) is a coalition of those and other community groups working with developers to ensure that transit oriented projects built in Othello are just, equitable, attractive and compatible with the community. The Othello Park International Music and Arts Festival is presented by the Othello Park Alliance (OPA).

Everyone is invited to this free public celebration.

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UNCF Seeking Students And Mentors For 2015-2016 Portfolio Project

The UNCF in partnership with the YMCA Black Achievers Program, YMCA Minority Achievers Program, YMCA Multi-Cultural Achievers Program, and Leisure Hour Golf Program will host their 10th annual UNCF Portfolio Project.

The Portfolio Project, which aims to increase the number of minority and low-income college and scholarship applicants from states of Oregon and Washington, is an 11-week program designed to assist 11th and 12th grade students through the college and scholarship application process. Ultimately, the program strives to ensure these students create a portfolio that will support their efforts in getting accepted into college and receiving the necessary financial assistance to become successful college graduates.

This free program consists weekly sessions that begin in August. The sessions are held at four locations across the Pacific NW — Seattle, Marysville, Portland and Tacoma. In addition to the sessions, Portfolio Project students will have the opportunity to apply for the Portfolio Project Scholarship and attend the UNCF Black College Fair in October.

Since 2006, Portfolio Project students have been able to clarify and become confident in post-high school plans and choices. The mentorship and guidance that has been provided from this program has not only produced a 92% student acceptance rate into a college, but has also helped students procure thousands of dollars to attend college.

For more information about the Portfolio Project, visit www.uncf.org/portfolioproject or contact Vonzell McDowell via email at uncf.portfolioproject@gmail.com.

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County To Mail Out Primary Election Ballots July 15

King County Elections will mail ballots July 15 for the August 4 primary election. Voters' pamphlets are mailed separately and may arrive on a different day than ballots.

"Seattle voters will elect their council members by district for the first time in the August 4th primary election. For those of you outside the city- not to worry, as you will have a variety of county races and measures awaiting your votes also," said Sherril Huff, Director of King County Elections. "So go for it, be a first day to vote, informed voter!"

There are a total of 165 candidates and 45 offices on the ballot, with 27 jurisdictions participating in the primary. Forty-seven candidates are running for nine Seattle city council seats. Seven of the nine seats are being elected by district, the remaining two will be elected at large (citywide). There are five measures on the ballot from three jurisdictions.

Options for returning ballots

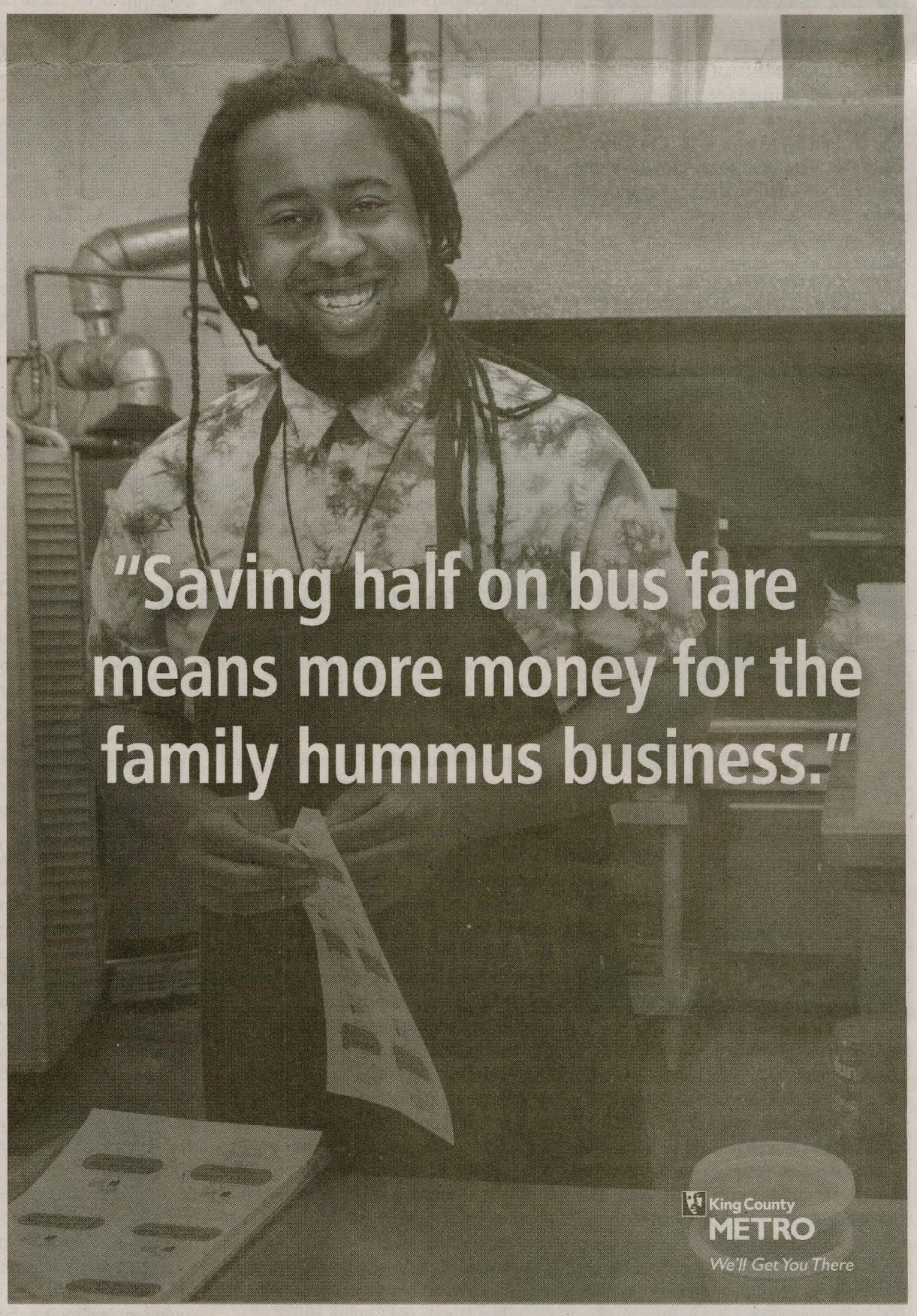
Voters should read and follow directions on their ballots, sign the return envelope, and get ballots back before the Aug. 4 election day deadline. Mailed ballots need a first-class stamp; postage is now 49 cents. Voters also have 24 locations to return ballots without a stamp by 8 p.m. on Aug. 4, including permanent drop box locations, scheduled ballot drop-off vans and Accessible Voting Centers.

In-person voter registration deadline

Citizens not yet registered to vote in Washington state have until July 27 at 4:30 p.m. to register in person at the following locations: King County Elections Headquarters, 919 SW Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057; and King County Voter Registration Annex, 500 4th Avenue, Room 440, Seattle, WA 98104

Voters who don't receive a ballot by July 20 or who have questions should call King County Elections at 206-296-VOTE (8683).

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To Be Equal

How Will 2016's Presidential Candidates Save Our Cities?



By Marc H. Morial
NNPA Columnist

"You must register. You must vote. You must learn, so your choice advances your interest and the interest of our beloved Nation. Your future, and your children's future, depend upon it, and I don't believe that you are going to let them down."
– President Lyndon B. Johnson on the Signing of the Voting Rights Act, August 1965

For four days beginning in July, political, business, and community leaders will convene in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. for the 2015 National Urban League Conference. Conference attendees should expect to engage in thought-provoking discussions with leaders and experts in a variety of areas, including economics, entertainment, civil rights and politics.

This year, following a long-standing tradition of major-party presidential candidates addressing the conference, the National Urban League counts several 2016 presidential hopefuls – Republicans and Democrats alike – as invited guests. The candidates, including former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and retired neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson, will share their respective vision and strategies to save our cities.

The candidates' plenary session, "Save Our Cities: Education, Jobs + Justice," falls under the umbrella of the National Urban League's "Save Our Cities" campaign, an unprecedented mobilization to influence public policy through grassroots political action.

As we know far too well, our country faces tremendous challenges. Rather than recite our problems, rather than fall into the trap of recycling failed solutions for today's and tomorrow's challenges, we will reunite in Florida to deliberate on solutions and fresh ideas to the economic and social troubles plaguing our cities. These are discussions that are too important to take place in silos. The solutions to our challenges are stronger with buy-in, engagement and resources from all concerned stakeholders. So, it is vital that those contending for the highest office in the land be a part of that conversation.

The ravages of inequality on American families, particularly among those in African-American and Latino communities, continues to rip our nation apart. We must question and listen to any candidate's proposals to reverse this ever-widening trend of inequality.

An educated citizenry is best prepared to choose the candidate who will advance his or her interests, and ultimately, the interests of a stronger, healthier and more inclusive nation. During his remarks on the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, President Lyndon Johnson said, "The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men." The stakes are too high for us, and for future generations, not to have these discussions together.

In this year's analysis of the "State of Black America," the National Urban League found that while strides have been made in Black and Brown communities, tremendous gaps continue to leave us with a crisis in education, jobs and justice. In the case of justice, a series of horrific acts – from the deaths of Black men and women at the hands of police, to the racially motivated murder of nine people in a South Carolina church, to the legislative efforts in some states to rob Americans of their constitutional right to vote –cries out for serious and immediate reform.

While our economy is improving after the recession, the bounce back has not been as evident in many Black and Brown communities. For too many Americans, the recession is alive and well. As Congress continues to debate reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we, along with a diverse coalition of policy-makers, families and community activists, are fighting to ensure that any new legislation adopted protects civil rights and promotes equity, equality and accountability in education.

These conversations are indispensable in this moment in which we as a nation find ourselves of perhaps the greatest social and economic upheaval in a generation. Choose to be a part of our discussion and conversation, or choose to get involved in the discussions and conversations that are happening, or will happen in your communities – every voice and vote matters.

Tear Down The Walls Of Economic Inequality



By Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

After a spirited debate, the South Carolina House and Senate voted overwhelmingly to remove the Confederate battle flag from Statehouse grounds at the urging of Gov. Nikki Haley, who quickly signed the measure into law. The flag was lowered for the final time on Capitol grounds Friday morning. Many South Carolinians hailed its ceremonious removal as a "new day" for their state as well as a fitting tribute to State Senator Clementa Pinckney, one of the nine massacred at Emanuel A.M.E. Church, where he was the pastor.

Revulsion from the Bible study slaughter sparked conversations all over the country about the Confederate flag. An Iowan who sold ice to Walmart with a confederate logo (go figure) was told he had to change his logo or sell his ice elsewhere. The U.S. House of Representatives has banned display of the Confederate flag on sites maintained by the National Park Service. Mississippi Senators Thad Cochran and Roger Wicker say the Mississippi flag should be redesigned to remove the Confederate symbol.

At the same time, support for the Confederate flag is unwavering. A poll conducted for CNN found that 66 percent of Whites consider the Confederate flag more of a symbol of Southern pride than racism, a view shared by only 17 percent of Blacks. While 72 percent of Blacks consider the flag a symbol of racism, only 25 percent of Whites agree, with the remainder of them saying the flag represent each point of view equally, were undecided or expressed no opinion.

Removing the flag from public places and putting it in museums is a victory for those who reject this symbol of racial subjugation. Still, every economic statistic screams racial subjugation. President Obama had it right (if belatedly) when he said that employers are more willing to employ Johnny than Jamal. Last month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that Black unemployment rate was 9.5 percent, more than twice the 4.6 percent rate than Whites experienced. Some economists will say that African Americans are less educated than Whites, explaining part of the unemployment rate gap. Others will cite other factors, such as occupation and location. Race still plays a role in unemployment rate differentials.

White men and White high school dropouts have about the same unemployment rate as Black high school graduates, and highly educated Blacks always have higher unemployment rates than less well educated Whites. While education pays off for Blacks, as those with better educations are paid more than those with less education, Whites get a greater return on education than Blacks.

If we want to remove vestiges of racial subjugation, we ought to pay attention to unemployment rate differentials and work as hard to eradicate them as we did to take down that Confederate flag in South Carolina. How? President Obama could sign an executive order directing the Department of Labor and other federal departments to target money and programs to the inner city or, more specifically, to African Americans. In these closing months of his presidency, he has used executive orders for other purposes. Why not use one to ensure that Jamal gets treated the same way as Johnny?

In addition to Jamal and Johnny, how about Tamika and Theresa? Though the unemployment rate gap is smaller between Black and White women, there are gaps in pay and working conditions. Because more than 40 percent of Black families are female-headed, low pay for Black women translate to different living conditions for Black families.

Similar differences are measured in the poverty rate, where more than a quarter of Black families live in poverty, compared to fewer than 10 percent of White families. Average pay for an African American family is about $31,000, compared to about $52,000 for White families. Congress has been hostile to any poverty-prevention programs, fighting to reduce food stamps programs and pushing back on Obama-backed legislation to increase the minimum wage. In the midst of legislative hostility, could President Obama do anything to lower poverty and especially the gap in the poverty rate? Certainly appointing a Presidential Commission to propose legislation on poverty prevention would be a first, if only symbolic.

The wealth gap is staggering. African Americans have a scant 2.5 percent of our nation's wealth. The median wealth for White families is $120,000, compared to $7,000 for Black families. The wealth gap is partly a function of the inability for African Americans to attain wealth, certainly during slavery and the Black Codes era, and beyond. There were exceptions, of course, but the gaping wealth gap affects the quality of life for African Americans. What to do? The president might consider the Institute of the Black World's proposal for a John Hope Franklin Commission for Reparatory Justice to explore the possibility of, among other things, reparations.

Taking down the Confederate flag without tearing down the walls of racial economic inequality is a partial victory. While I am elated that South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has expressed her opposition to the Confederate flag as a symbol of hate and White supremacy, I wonder if she will fight to end the institutional racism that results in higher unemployment rates, lower incomes, and less wealth for African Americans.

Congress Urges Stronger Action Against Payday Loan Vendors



By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Columnist

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) will provide $32 million in relief to consumers who were caught in a maze of charges and fees designed to trap them in payday loans they never authorized. The enforcement action announced July 7, affects two lenders based in Kansas City, Mo. who operated as many as 16 different businesses involved in online lending. The FTC also imposed an additional $22 million fine against the lenders and banned them from all consumer lending.

Members of Congress are urging the FTC to take similar action against similar violators.

Every day online and storefront payday lenders trap borrowers in long-term cycles of debt. Their triple-digit interest rates and access to borrowers' bank accounts or car-titles place these borrowers in financial jeopardy. FTC's actions and others undertaken by federal and state regulators reveal rampant abuses in the short-term, small-dollar lending market.

More than 100 Members of Congress representing 35 states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands, recently urged the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to enact a strong rule to curb abusive practices by payday lenders and other high-cost predatory loans like car-title and certain installment loans.

In separate letters, 33 U.S. Senators and 68 House Members urged the same action: strong regulation and enforcement of abusive and predatory consumer lending.

Their calls for CFPB rulemaking comes as the Bureau finalizes its proposed rule, first announced in late March. At that time, a letter signed by 500 consumer advocates from all 50 states waged an unprecedented push for reining in abusive small-dollar and high-cost loans engaged the White House and Capitol Hill.

Now, after listening to an onslaught of diverse and strong voices, federal lawmakers are adding their voices and influence to the continuing fight for fairness.

"Predatory lenders should not be able to continue unfair, deceptive, and abusive acts or practices that are designed to trap borrowers in a cycle of debt," wrote 33 Senators. "This is a business model rooted in preying on individuals and families that have no ability to repay, and the CFPB has a critical opportunity to protect consumers by issuing strong rules."

Members of Congress with constituencies as varied as their broad geographic expanses similarly called for CFPB to adopt strong regulation.

"While there is a need for affordable credit, unfair, deceptive and abusive payday and car title lending practices often pull consumers into a cycle of debt," wrote the members. "We support the Bureau's efforts to close the door to unaffordable loans by addressing failure to underwrite for affordable payments, repeatedly rolling over or refinancing loans, accessing the consumer's account for repayment, and performing costly withdrawals."

As consumer advocates stress the importance of the ability to repay a loan as a cornerstone of both responsible lending and effective regulation, a new poll jointly commissioned by Americans for Financial Reform and the Center for Responsible Lending, asked 2016 likely voters their opinions on consumer lending and regulation, Wall Street influences and actions taken by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).

Respondents showed strong and bipartisan support for regulation of financial services and products. By more than a **10-to-one margin, they favored** a rule requiring small-dollar lenders to verify a customer's ability to repay before a loan can be issued.

Other poll results showed:

- Nearly three-quarters – 73 percent – said they favor the central provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act;
- Respondents continue to view the financial industry as under-regulated; and
- They also believed that regulations and enforcement will ensure financial institutions act fairly and responsibly.

"We are thankful for lawmakers and regulators standing up against these predatory loan practices which drain billions of dollars a year from low-income families," said Diane Standaert, director of state policy with the Center for Responsible Lending. "As CFPB moves towards issuing its proposed rules, we urge it to use its full authority to stop the dangerous debt trap of these loans, and eliminating loopholes."

According to policy experts, CFPB could act on the pending regulation sometime this fall.

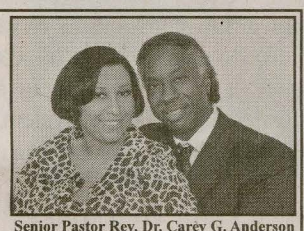
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Seattle, WA 98118
206-723-3636

Supt. James E. Hicks
Founder/Pastor
&
Mary. Helen B. Hicks
First Lady

Sunday
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 7:00 PM

Tuesday
Prayer & Bible Band
Prayer 7:00 PM
Bible Study 7:30 PM

Thursday
Family Enrichment
(To Be Announced)

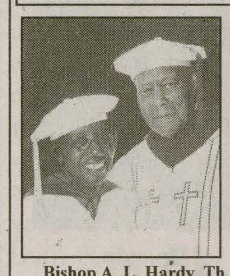
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Academic Dean Attorney Phillip Aaron

Rose Of Sharon Pentecostal Church



ORDER OF SERVICE
Church School...9:30am
Worship Hour...11:15am
Sunday Evening...7:00pm
Wednesday Evangelistic Service.....7:00 pm
Prayer Saturday at Noon

Office: (206) 722-4920
Foyer: (206) 722-9972
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Seattle, WA 98118

Greater New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church



5279 Rainier Avenue South
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206-725-0490
www.gnbchurch.com

Rev. Dana E. McClendon, Pastor

Sunday Services:
Sunday School – 9:45 AM
Worship Service – 11:00 AM

Wednesdays:
Voices of GNB rehearsal – 6:00 PM

PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays:
Midday study – 11:00 AM
Evening study – 7:00 PM
Youth Bible study – 7:00 PM

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Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church Senior Care Support And Outreach Ministry Hosts Free Community Forums And Workshop

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church Senior Care Support and Outreach Ministry will host free community forums and workshop on the following dates:

•Wednesday, August 5th (1pm-2pm): "Healthcare Identity Theft: How to Protect Yourself from Medical fraud and protect your Medical Records. "

•Wednesday, August 12th (1pm-2pm): "Project Enhanced Health, Wellness, and Fitness Programs available to older adults through Senior Services." We will focus on how to improve functional fitness and well being.

•Wednesday, August 19th (1pm-2pm): "Falls Prevention Awareness : Are You At Risk?" The focus will be on common risks in your home, health and age related changes, old habits, stairs, medications, and losing balance that can cause falls.

For more information contact Minister Shirley Perry-Poston at 425.917.3158 or seniorcaresom1@gmail.com. Refreshments will be served.

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church is located at 2801 South Jackson Street, in Seattle. Reverend

Robert L. Manaway, Sr. is senior pastor and Evangelist Jessica P. Manaway is overseer.

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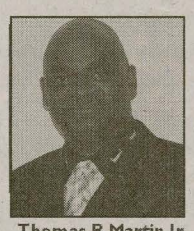
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Sunday School 9:15
Morning Service - 11:00 AM

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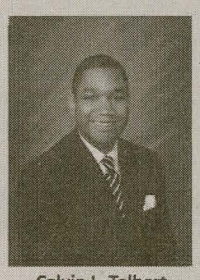


Thomas R Martin Jr.,
Minister

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Sunday
Bible Study 9:30AM
Morning Worship 10:30AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Study 7:00 PM

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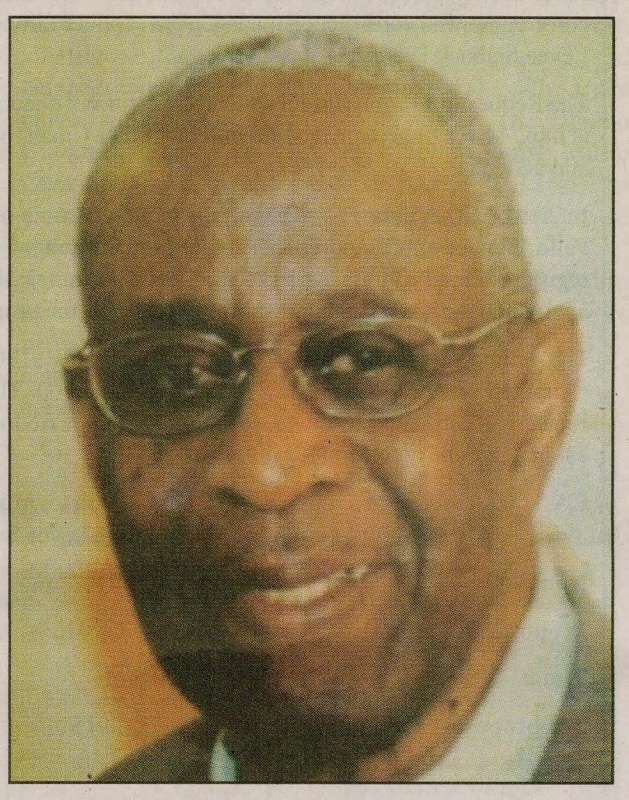
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In Loving Memory Of Charles Edward McCraney, Sr.



Sunrise: July 14, 1922

Sunset: July 2, 2015

Charles Edward McCraney Sr. was born on July 14, 1922 to the late Charles and Marie McCraney in Hammond, Louisiana. He attended Hammond Colored School for elementary and high school.

His religious background began at an early age when he confessed his love for Christ and was baptized at Greenfield Baptist Church under the leadership of Rev. W. M. Mixon. He had a love for the Masonic family and joined the John G. Jones Lodge #4 of Hammond, LA in 1948.

Charles and Katherine Shuemake-Taylor join in holy matrimony in 1953. Charles leaves to treasure his memories his beloved and caring wife Katherine of 63 years as well as his ten children and their spouses.

Charles left behind a rich legacy and will be missed by all. Charles was a great man and was well respected by all. He loved and is loved by his family and friends. He will be missed, but never ever forgotten.

Funeral services were held July 11, 2015 at New Hope Baptist Church in Seattle.

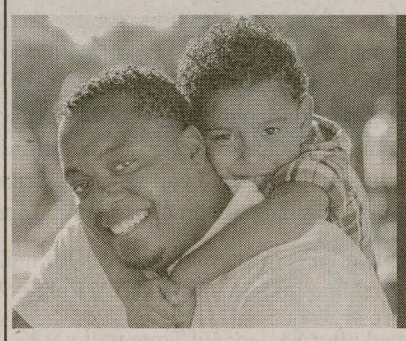
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KING COUNTY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ADVERTISEMENT

King County is requesting Proposals from qualified firms interested in providing pre-construction and construction management services through closeout for the Countyline Levee Setback Project.

The Request for Proposals, all addenda and current document holder's list are available at http://www.kingcounty.gov/procurement. The County will not mail, ship or fax RFPs and addenda.

Interested firms must register with the County at time of download and ensure that a valid contact email address is given. Notification of addenda will be sent to the registered email address. Failure to register will result in the Proposer not being notified of any addenda, which may result in rejection of the proposal.

The estimated price of Phase 1 of this contract is $100,000 to $150,000. The total estimated price of Phase 2 is $700,000 to $800,000. The period of performance for Phase 1 is estimated to be six (6) months. The period of performance of Phase 2 is estimated to be nineteen (19) months.

Contract Title:	Construction Management Services for Countyline Levee Setback Project
Number:	P00179P15
Proposals due:	August 3, 2015
Time:	12:00 p.m.
Pre-proposal Meeting:	July 22, 2015
Time:	3:30 p.m.
Location:	North Wind Conference Room, 7th Floor, King Street Center (201 S. Jackson Street, Seattle, WA)

SUMMARY OF WORK: The Consultant will provide pre-construction and construction management services including project management, develop a construction management plan, coordinate meetings, document control and electronic records management, risk management plan, pre-bid services, QA/QC, evaluate contractor's schedule, phasing plan and request for payment, coordinate with design consultant and outside agencies, construction drawings and file maintenance, change order control, request for information and submittal processing, inspection and other field services, and construction contract closeout.

SUBCONSULTANT OPPORTUNITIES: Provided for informational purposes only, following are subconsulting opportunities that may be available on this Contract: construction inspection and document control.

SCS UTILIZATION REQUIREMENTS: The Consultant shall ensure that at least 10% of the Contract Price for all Work, as amended, shall be performed by King County Certified SCS Firms over the life of the Contract. Evaluation points for meeting and/or exceeding the SCS utilization requirements will be provided to each proposer responding to this requirement. King County will not evaluate the proposal and will not execute a contract with a Proposer who does not commit to meet at least the SCS utilization requirement as stated above.

QUESTIONS: Questions concerning this solicitation should be directed to **Ken Curl, Contract Specialist** via email at ken.curl@kingcounty.gov or via telephone at **206-263-9322**, TTY Relay: 711. The Proposer may be requested to submit the question in writing. No verbal answers by County personnel will be binding on the County.

This information is available in alternate formats for individuals with disabilities upon advance request by calling 206-263-9400, TTY Relay: 711.

KING COUNTY
INVITATION TO BID

Project: West Snoqualmie Valley Road NE Slide Repair, C00921C14

Sealed Bid Time/Date: 1:30 p.m., July 30, 2015

Location Due: King County Procurement & Contract Services Section, Contracts Counter, 3rd Floor, 401 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Engineer's Estimate: $315,000 - $370,000.

Scope of Work: This project provides for the slide repair of West Snoqualmie Valley Road NE from NE Novelty Hill Rd to approximately 450 feet north in King County by clearing and grubbing, roadway excavation, grading, surfacing, paving with HMA, striping, constructing beam guardrail and anchor, constructing a structural earth wall, and other work, all in accordance with the attached Plans, these Special Provisions, and the 2014 APWA/WSDOT Standard Specifications for Road, Bridge, and Municipal Construction.

Contact Information: Mark Hoge, Contract Specialist, 206-263-9325, TTY Relay: 711, Fax: 206-296-7675, or mark.hoge@kingcounty.gov. A bidder may be asked to put a question in writing. No verbal answers by any County personnel or its agents and consultants will be binding on the County. **All inquiries must be received by the County a minimum of four business days prior to the bid opening date.**

Pre-Bid Conference: There is no pre-bid conference or site tour scheduled. The site is open to the public.

Training Requirements: No minimum Training Requirement.

DBE Participation: Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation for this federally-funded project shall be at least 11% of the contract total.

Bid Bond: Not less than five percent (5%) of the Total Bid Price

Bid Documents: Electronic copies of the plans, specifications, reference documents, and any addenda for this solicitation are available on the King County Procurement website shown below. Printed documents may also be ordered by contacting United Reprographics at 206-382-1177. Copies of documents are not available for purchase from King County, but are available for review M – F, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Contracts Counter: Chinook Bldg., 3rd Floor 401 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104.

To receive email notifications of addenda or other important information concerning this solicitation, you must register to be a planholder under the "Solicitations" tab at the following internet link:

Website: http://www.kingcounty.gov/procurement/solicitations

Title VI Compliance: King County in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises as defined at 49 CFR Part 26 will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex in consideration for an award.

This information is available in alternate formats for individuals with disabilities upon advance request by calling 206-263-9400, TTY Relay: 711.

Notes: Bids received after Sealed Bid Time will not be considered. Bidders accept all risks of late delivery, regardless of fault. King County is not responsible for any costs incurred in response to this Invitation to Bid.

KING COUNTY
INVITATION TO BID

Project: Vashon Treatment Plant UV Disinfection System, C00963C15

Sealed Bid Time/Date: 1:30 p.m., July 30, 2015

Location Due: King County Procurement & Contract Services Section, Contracts Counter, 3rd Floor, 401 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Engineer's Estimate: $571,000 – $631,000

Scope of Work: Installation of a new ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system and demolition of an existing UV disinfection system within a continuously operating wastewater treatment plant, including installation of an equipment shelter with concrete slab, concrete and screen shelter walls, metal roof structure, foundation and process drains, power receptacles, utility station and lighting; landscape block retaining wall and localized surface regrading; electrical work associated with the UV disinfection packaged system; modifications and additions to underground gravity process piping including trenching and backfilling; installation of new fiber optic and replacement signal cables in existing empty underground conduits; installation of new fiber optic panel; electrical and communications connections to existing remote panel and to disinfection sampling and controls components installed and programmed by County staff; installation and removal of temporary piping and electrical connections; demolition of existing UV disinfection packaged system, associated mechanical and electrical equipment and concrete walkways; restoration of grass and pavement.

Work site: The project work is located at 9621 SW 171st Street, Vashon, Washington.

Contact Information: Tina Davis, 206-263-2939, TTY Relay: 711, Fax: 206-296-7675, or tina.davis@kingcounty.gov. A bidder may be asked to put a question in writing. No verbal answers by any County personnel or its agents and consultants will be binding on the County.

Pre-Bid Conference: A pre-bid conference is not scheduled. A site tour is not scheduled.

Subcontracting Opportunities: Concrete installation; steel and roof structure; building mechanical systems; building electrical systems; demolition; site earthwork and development; site plumbing utilities; site electrical utilities.

Apprenticeship Requirements: No minimum Apprentice Utilization Requirement.

SCS Utilization Requirements. 3% minimum requirement for King County Certified Small Contractors and Suppliers (SCS).

Bid Bond: Not less than five percent (5%) of the Total Bid Price.

Bid Documents: Electronic copies of the plans, specifications, reference documents, and any addenda for this solicitation are available on the King County Procurement website shown below. Printed documents may also be ordered by contacting United Reprographics at 206-382-1177. Copies of documents are not available for purchase from King County, but are available for review 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. M thru F. at the Contracts Counter: Chinook Bldg, 3rd Floor, 401 Fifth Avenue Seattle, WA 98104.

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Notes: Bids received after Sealed Bid Time will not be considered. Bidders accept all risks of late delivery, regardless of fault. King County is not responsible for any costs incurred in response to this Invitation to Bid.

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FIRST PUBLICATION

King County Housing Authority (KCHA)
Electrical Upgrades and Fire Alarm System Design for Corinthian Apartments

RFQ Due Date: August 7, 2015; 4:30 pm

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The King County Housing Authority is issuing a competitive Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from qualified engineering firms to provide design services for electrical upgrades and fire alarm system at Corinthian Apartments. RFQ Packages are available for download on KCHA's website at http://www.kcha.org/business/professional/open/. If you have questions, please contact Cristy Thompson at cristyt@kcha.org. Sealed Statements of Qualifications, in accordance with conditions defined in the RFQ, must be received via USPS Certified mail, overnight delivery services (UPS, etc.) or hand delivered to KCHA, 600 Andover Park West, Tukwila, WA 98188 no later than 4:30 p.m. on August 7, 2015. Faxed or e-mailed submittals will not be accepted. Please submit three copies of the proposal.

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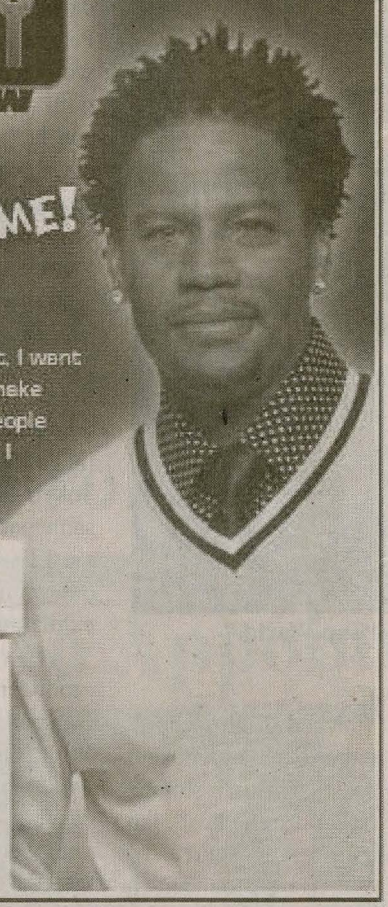
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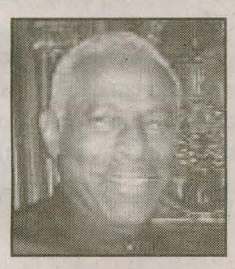


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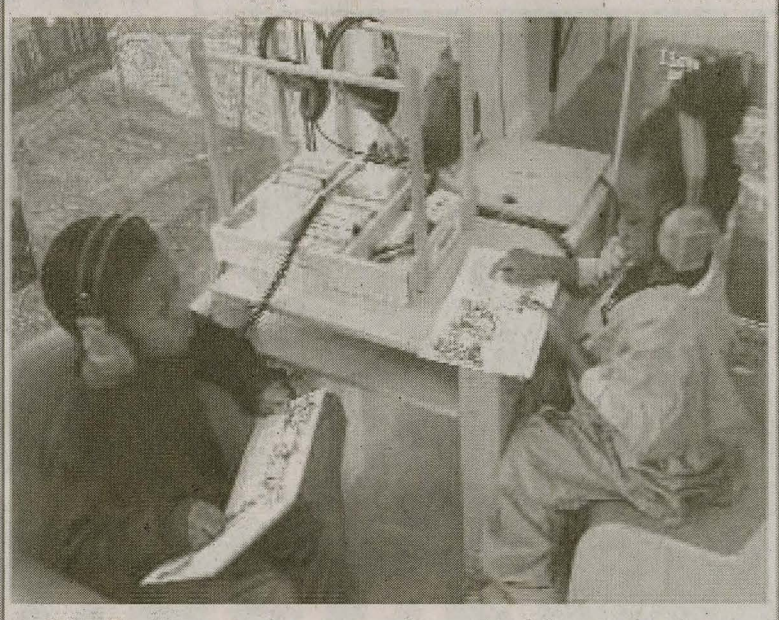
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Movie Review: Tap World

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

At one point in this sweet gem of a documentary, two tap dancers from different parts of the world define the joy and philosophy of tap dancing: "Dance to express, not to impress," says Chloe Arnold of the U.S. "I dance, therefore I am," states Arthur Benhamou of Paris. Those basic acknowledgments are probably why tap dancing, which one might assume is strictly an American phenomenon, is so loved around the world and a thriving, inspiring performing art.



Chloe Arnold and friends in the dance documentary "Tap World."

The roots of tap dancing can be traced to Irish dancing and Juba dance. The latter was originally from West Africa and transformed into a plantation dance, which used the tap sounds as codes. Strains of the dance came from the Caribbean and the Southern United States, eventually evolving into the traditional Broadway tap, seen in musicals, and the more improvised Rhythm (Jazz) tap, which like jazz music is more fluid.

We often think of sports as a vehicle for young people who need a focus that will propel them forward. This highly enlightening film showcases dancers from nine to 91, who use tap as a means of expression, a driving force, and are welcomed into a nurturing community. In New York's Hell's Kitchen, long before it became gentrified, Jason Samuels Smith lived with his single mom in a five-floor walkup apartment with two rooms that were always filled with more than two people. He had no father figure, until he gravitated to some older men in the neighborhood who taught him how to tap dance and be a man.

Joshua Johnson grew up in the projects in Harlem and witnessed a peer getting shot and dying. He moved out of his broken home when he finished high school. Then, he couch-surfed, kept his possessions in a storage locker and relied on tap dancing as a source of income. He tap danced in subway cars for loose change, and his courage and determination landed him a piece in the *New York Times*, an appearance on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* and tuition for Penn State University.

Vickie Riordan, a single mother, started a tap dance class in Harrisburg, Pa., which attracted a lot of women who were dealing with domestic issues. Her son helped her market her class, which turned into the America's largest adults-only tap group with 500 women and men, students who she calls Tap Pups.

Tap dancing kids from fevelas in Brazil, a tapping troupe in Taiwan, a soloist who performs on the streets in Paris, urban tappers in Tokyo – they all follow the same pattern. Tap dancing, self-discovery, determination and exhilaration.

Executive producer/director Dean Hargrove started with a short film called *Tap Heat*, which paralleled two tap dancers, one traditional and one a street stylist, who melded the two styles to enhance the art form. *Tap World*, an extension of that effort, uses footage from all over the globe, which focuses on the community of tap dancers. Interviews with dance historian Constance Valis Hill add gravitas. The technical aspects – editing, cinematography – are fine and don't block the spirit of the artists who lift this film up with their performances and anecdotes. Though it is great to see these unknown disciples of tap, it seems odd that the legacy bearer of Rhythm tap, Savion Glover, who passes on a tradition that goes back a generation to Gregory Hines and further back than him, is not present or even the narrator.

It's hard not to smile when a young tap dancer, who loses a leg to cancer, gets a peg leg and continues doing what he loves because he can follow in the footsteps of physically challenged dancers such as the legendary Peg Leg Bates. And it's touching when African American dancer Chloe Arnold heads to Japan to perform with dancers in Tokyo; there is not culture clash, it's a mesh of cultures.

You wouldn't have known that tap dancing is as international as Coca Cola, until you saw this thoroughly heartwarming film.

Bill Cosby's Art Collection To Remain On View At Smithsonian

By Brett Zongker
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) - Over the past seven months, as sexual misconduct allegations against Bill Cosby mounted, a top Smithsonian official met privately with museum directors across the sprawling complex on the National Mall to decide what to do about an exhibit showcasing Cosby's private art collection.

While many companies and universities were distancing themselves from the comedian, Smithsonian officials ultimately concluded the exhibit should continue.

``First and fundamentally, this is an art exhibit," Richard Kurin, the Smithsonian's undersecretary for art, history and culture told The Associated Press. ``So it's not about the life and career of Bill Cosby. It's about the artists."

About a third of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art's 50th anniversary exhibition came from Bill and Camille Cosby's extensive African-American art collection, and two-thirds came from the museum's own collection.

Most of the Cosby collection had never before been seen by the public. It includes paintings by one-time slaves, pieces commissioned for the Cosbys, a piece by Cosby's daughter and quilts made in tribute to Cosby and his slain son, Ennis. The exhibit also includes images of Cosby and quotations from him.

Even without the assault allegations, the exhibit raised concerns. Some critics frown on showcasing a private collection in a prominent museum because it can enhance the artwork's market value. Also, Camille Cosby sits on the museum's board and initiated the loan, which raises questions about conflicts of interest.

Now the Smithsonian has revealed to The Associated Press that the Cosbys also funded the exhibition with a $716,000 gift, which virtually covers the entire cost. Museum industry guidelines call for museums to make public the source of funding when an art lender funds an exhibit, but the Smithsonian did not reveal Cosby's financial gift until Friday, even though the exhibit opened in November.

Noah Kupferman, an art market expert at Shapiro Auctions who has taught about the economics of fine art, said such financial arrangements are not unprecedented, but museums must be transparent about them.

``It just raises a little eyebrow that a trustee of a museum is lending (her) own collection, funding part of the exhibition and the exhibition is highlighting works ... by less well-known artists whose work is considered by some to be undervalued," he said. ``Repositioning these artists' works as suddenly important could have significant positive effect on their economic value."

The exhibit has drawn 150,000 visitors so far, according to the Smithsonian.

A promotion for the exhibit is prominently displayed on Cosby's website even as his reputation has collapsed in recent months amid accusations of sexual misconduct by more than two dozen women.

Some art critics have called for the Smithsonian to stop showcasing Cosby's art collection.

The Smithsonian defended the exhibit on its artistic merits.

``We certainly don't condone his behavior," Kurin said. ``We're just as deeply disturbed and disappointed as I think everybody else. But it's not about Mr. Cosby. This is an art exhibit."

In the past, The Smithsonian has removed some controversial pieces of exhibits under pressure, but ``we've never taken an exhibit down," said Kurin, who has worked at the museum complex for decades.

In 2010, the Smithsonian was accused of censorship when it removed a video from the National Portrait Gallery exhibit about how sexual orientation and gender identity have shaped American art after complaints from a Catholic group and members of Congress.

An outside review concluded that unless there is an error, changes should not be made to an exhibit once it's opened without a full consultation with curators, museum directors and the Smithsonian's governing board.

For many museum experts and scholars, removing the Cosby exhibit would set a dangerous precedent.

``You'd be sort of stomping all over the curatorial integrity of what you've put up," said Jack Rasmussen, director of the American University Museum. ``I think if museums had to investigate the morals of every lender, that would be kind of a new and very difficult situation. Really, it's about the art."

Museums have displayed privately held art collections for decades because they can complement a museum's own collection, said Martha Morris, assistant director of museum studies at George Washington University.

``The only thing that could possibly be a criticism is that once a private collection is on display in an art museum ... it begins to add to its status," Morris said. ``That could potentially add to its value if the collector wanted to sell something, for example, or even give it away to a nonprofit for a tax benefit."

But an art loan could also lead to a donation of artwork to a museum, Morris said.

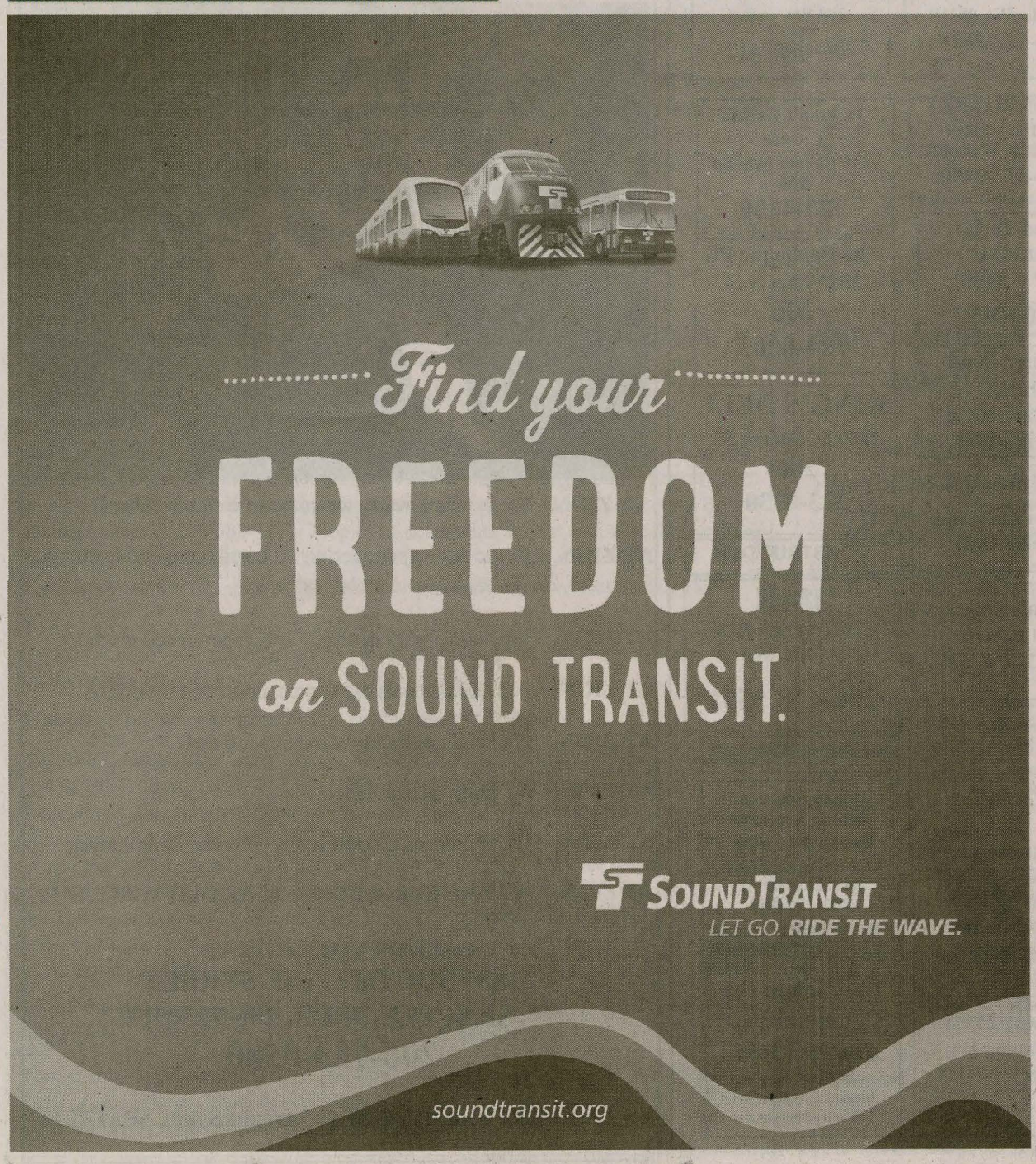
Smithsonian lawyers reviewed the Cosby loan and determined any increase in the artworks' value was a non-issue, in part because the Cosbys did not intend to sell the art, Kurin said.

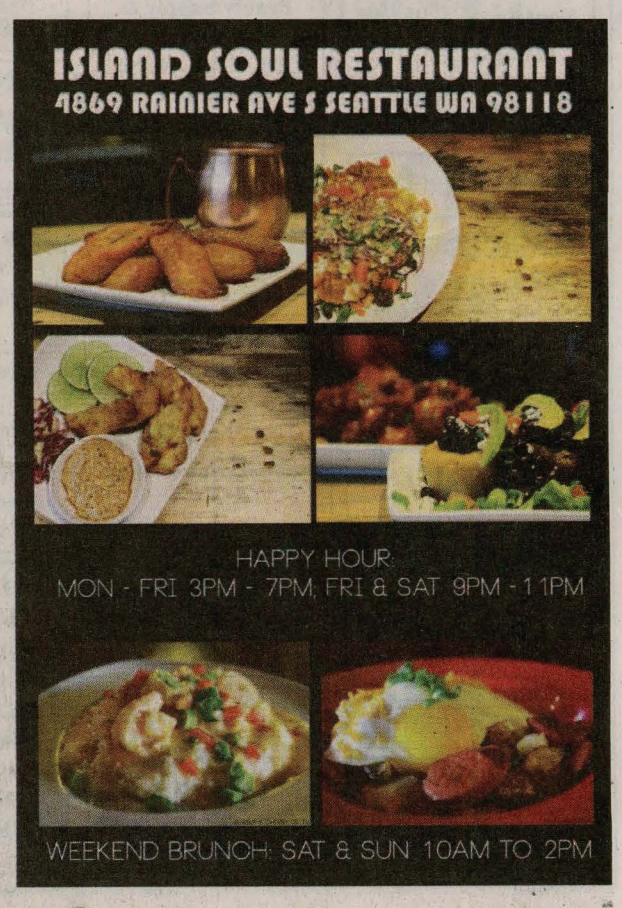
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The Seattle Medium

COMMUNITY ROOTS

Section B

Sponsored by SNOQUALMIE CASINO

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

2015 NNPA Merit Awards: Best Feature Story By An Aspiring Journalist

A Heart For Cooking:

Local Entrepreneur Lets Her Passion Fuel Her Success

EDITOR'S NOTE: ***The following story written by former Seattle Medium Intern Mariah Beverly won first place in the 2015 National Newspaper Publishers Association's Merit Awards Competition for Best Feature Story by an Aspring Journalist.***



Maryruth Woods is turning her passion for cooking into a flourishing career. ***Staff Photo/Chris B. Bennett.***

By Mariah Beverly
The Seattle Medium

Maryruth Woods has overcome many obstacles to get to where she is today. An aspiring business owner and chef, Woods has very high standards for herself and has taken the initiative to make her dreams a reality.

When Woods was 9, her mother passed away suddenly from an epileptic seizure, leaving her, her younger brother Billy Woods, and her father, alone.

"My mom's death bothered me more than I let on," Woods admits. "And after she died, I was notorious for my bad attitude."

Woods was close to her mother and being so young when she passed she didn't really know how to handle her death. Her "bad attitude" sometimes caused tension between her and her father.

Despite the absence of her mother in her life, Woods graduated from Cleveland High School, and despite the doubts of most of the people around her, she went on to pursue a degree at Paine College in Augusta, GA.

"Everyone said I wasn't going to college, and for a while I believed them," said Woods. "I had made no plans for my future."

By the end of her senior year, Woods hadn't applied to any colleges or universities, and assumed she would be attending the local community college, although she hadn't applied to any. She didn't know what she wanted to do when she finished high school, and hadn't taken any steps to plan for her future.

"Two weeks before my senior year was over, my biology teacher asked me if she got me into college would I go, and a few weeks later I was packing to leave," Woods says. "No one thought I could do it, so that made me work harder."

Woods believes if her biology teacher had never approached her, she would not have gone to college.

While in college, Woods says her biggest distraction was "paying attention and time management."

Woods admits that her high school experience did not fully prepare her for college. In high school, Woods found most of the work was easy, and she didn't retain much of the information.

"By the time I got to college, I didn't know anything," Woods recalled. "I had gotten by so easily in high school, that I didn't have the right work ethic for college."

At Paine, Woods switched majors several times before finally deciding to pursue a degree in Business Administration.

"In the beginning of my college career, I was doing what everyone else thought I should do, not what I wanted to do, "said Woods. "I had to start making my own decisions, choosing things for myself."

After college, Woods returned to Seattle and realized that her life's passion was in cooking, and she began seeking opportunities in the food industry.

"I've always loved cooking," said Woods. "When my mom passed away, I was put in charge of cooking for the house, I pretty much taught myself through trial and error."

After settling back in Seattle, Woods began working with catering companies, organizing her own business and enrolled at South Seattle Community College to pursue a degree in Culinary Arts. After attaining her Culinary Arts degree, Woods worked for multiple restaurants and catering companies including Endoline Jo's, Salty's, Island Soul, and Classic Catering. While working at the different restaurants, Woods learned valuable skills that eventually would help her start her own business. In addition, Woods also earned a degree in Confectionary Arts to help take her dessert and pasty skills to a whole new level.

Woods had also begun to build her own customer base by doing catering jobs for friends and family. As a member of First A.M.E Church in Seattle, she quickly built a name for herself by catering events that were held at the church, and for church members who needed a caterer for private events.

Now, Woods, who currently works as a cook at a private club in downtown Seattle, is following her passion and establishing the foundation to build her own empire from the ground up. Her first full-time venture will be called "Johnnie Lee's Fried Chicken," a catering/take out restaurant with gourmet fried chicken and flavorful side dishes.

Woods' menu will include Jerk Fried chicken, Smoked Fried chicken, Blue Cheese Potato salad, Macaroni and Cheese, and Peach Cobbler to name a few.

When asked what inspired her menu, Woods states: "I'm serving the food I grew up with, but adding my own twist to it."

Although beginning a business can be stressful, Woods believes her experience and drive will help her be successful. She also has the help of her husband, Richard Beverly, who is also a chef with a Culinary Arts degree.

"I only have one fear," says Woods, "Failing. I've put in a lot of work (towards this business) and I want people to be able to see that."

Woods believes that her past experiences have made her as headstrong and determined as she is today, and that her family and friends who continue to support her are also responsible for her success.

Woods plans to have her business up and running in the near future.

Update: *Woods was recently offered an opportunity to work with a renowned chef in the Greater Seattle Area, and has temporarily postponed her plans to open her own restaurant.*

State Board For Community and Technical Colleges Elects Shaunta Hyde As First African-American Woman Chair



Shaunta Hyde

Olympia — The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges recently elected Shaunta Hyde of Lake Forest Park as its chair, making her the first African-American woman to lead the board.

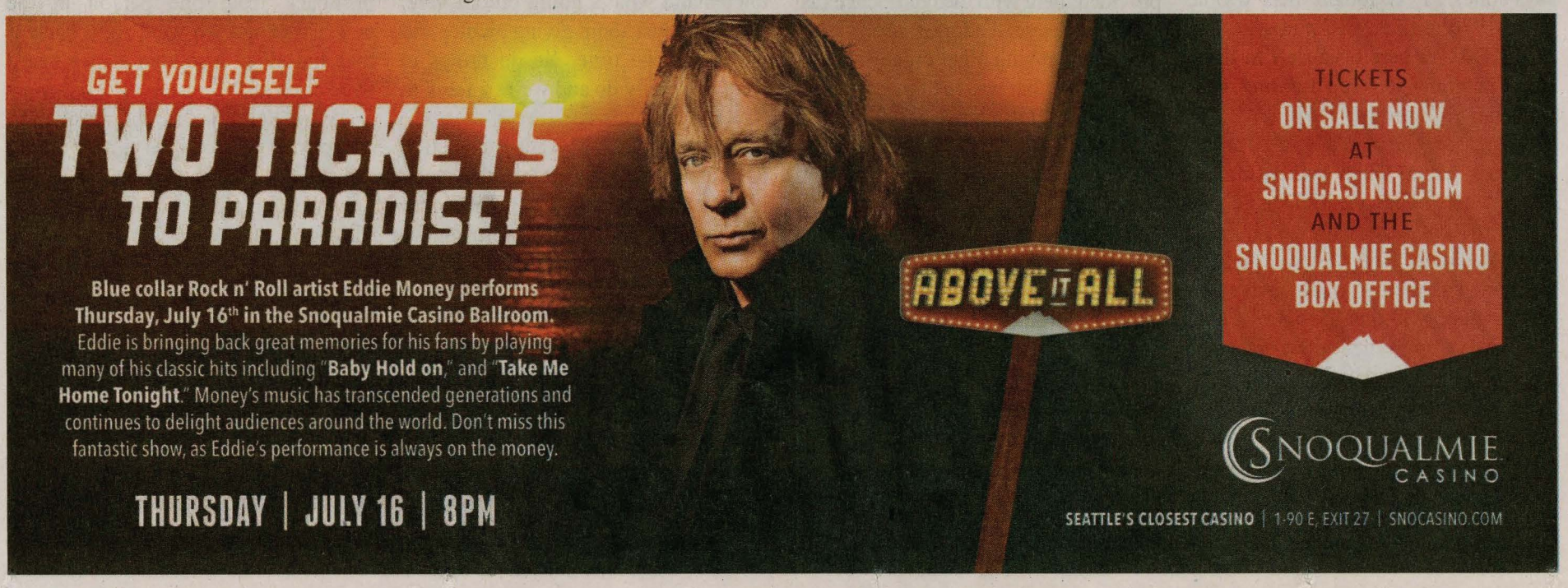
Hyde, who works as the managing director of community relations at Alaska Airlines, joined the State Board in 2009. She served as the board's vice chair since June 2013 and chair pro-tem since April.

"I'm excited and honored to serve as chair of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and I am proud to be the first African-American woman to be in that role," Hyde said. "Our state is growing more diverse every day, and our 34 colleges serve students of all walks of life. It's important that the State Board reflects the rich diversity of the state and colleges so our mission and goals provide a solid educational foundation for our students."

The elections were held late June during the board's meeting at Walla Walla Community College. Hyde will serve in her roles until the next elections in June 2016. The board's nine members, appointed by the governor and approved by the state Senate, provide general supervision and control over the state system of 34 community and technical colleges. This includes capital and operating budget allocations to the colleges, master planning for the college system, and setting minimum standards for college operation.

The Seattle Medium's Community Roots Section

is published the First Wednesday of every month



COMMUNITY ROOTS

Sponsored by SNOQUALMIE CASINO

Kent Black Action Commission: Standing Up For What's Right

By Chris B. Bennett
The Seattle Medium



Members of the Kent Black Action Commission. Pictured clockwise from the top: Willie Wright, Charles Carston, Gwen Allen-Carston, Azalea Johnson, Richard Johnson, Linda Sweezer, Charmaine Boston, and Alex Jones. ***Staff Photo/Chris B. Bennett.***

Whether they know it or not, many residents in the city of Kent are the beneficiaries of a grassroots organization that has quickly become a powerful group of people who are unapologetic when it comes to standing up, speaking out and promoting what is in the best interest of Black folks in South King County.

Founded in 2011, the Kent Black Action Commission, affectionately known as KBAC, is unwavering in their mission to improve and promote the social, political, economic, spiritual and educational conditions of Kent, Washington and the South King County Region.

The group, which initially started meeting in the garage of a founding member, does not waste time talking about problems until they are blue in the face and come away without solutions or a plan of action, but rather they meet with a purpose of deciding the best mode of action to take in order to address issues swiftly and effectively. Sometimes the action is quiet and subtle, and other times they are vocal and demanding. Either way, the proposed action is well thought out, planned and executed.

"We don't just come together to just sit together and have a meeting," said KBAC Executive Director Gwen Allen-Carston. "We are a group of people who are continually taking action. We continually want to make sure that we're doing things that help and serve our community."

As an increasing number of incidents began to take place in Kent, it became more and more apparent that African Americans living in the area needed a voice and an advocate. However, historic civil rights organizations and community activists in Seattle didn't have much of a footprint in Kent, and basically left the residents of the state's sixth largest city to fight their own battles.

"In the beginning, it was a bunch of people who were taking a look at our surroundings out here in Kent and seeing what was going on as far as our representation as a community, specifically, an African American/Black community and we felt that things were either not working in our favor or we needed to do more to help our own issues," says Allen-Carston.

Alex Jones, a member of KBAC, has seen first hand the difficulties African Americans have had to endure in Kent since he moved to the city 45 years ago. Jones has been fighting for justice and equality ever since.

"I was the first Black that the City of Kent hired. I had to go before the [city] council to be confirmed like you do in Washington D.C. and I thought that was unheard of just to mow grass," says Jones. "I 've fought these people since 1970 until KBAC came in. I'm glad KBAC is here because I'm tired. But I'm going to keep fighting with Gwen and this group."

One of KBAC's first major victories came when Allen-Carston attempted to go into the McDonald's on 256th in Kent across the street from Kent-Meridian High School. Allen-Carston was trying to go inside the restaurant only to find the door locked.

"I drive up to the McDonald's one day and the sign said we are closed until 4," recalled Allen-Carston.

The staff informed her that they were instructed to lock the doors between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. because they could not control the kids who came in the restaurant after getting out of school.

"I refuse to be treated like a 2nd class citizen when it comes to our children and the people in the community being locked out because your corporation doesn't have a clue about how to handle security," says Allen-Carston. "You're not only locking the doors on the young people, you're locking the doors on the customers. I'm a customer!"

According to Allen-Carston, working on behalf of KBAC she got an audience with McDonald's district director to address the issue. After that meeting, McDonald's from a corporate level "expressly told them" to not lock the doors again.

For KBAC, it was a moment that provided them with the confidence that they could indeed address issues alone or in tandem with other organizations.

"I think that was the thing that said we can handle this, we don't have to wait for the NAACP, we don't have to wait for the Urban League, so somebody had to do something and I said why not me," says Allen-Carston. "If there's a wrong, you attack the wrong and you do what's necessary to make the wrong right. That's how I feel and I ain't scared of none of them. I am not afraid."

"I think that's what KBAC stands for," says KBAC member Charmaine Boston. "We're not afraid to fight the fight."

Originally from Texas, Boston lived in Seattle for 25 years before relocating to Kent. Since joining the organization, KBAC has been the centerpiece of Boston's renewed focus on bettering her community, activism and advocacy. Her first encounter with KBAC was when she attended their Juneteenth celebration and she has been a member ever since.

"I felt Seattle was becoming disconnected," said Boston. "We lost CAMP and a lot of things that we had to depend on we didn't have anymore, so I moved to Kent."

"Since I've been in Kent, KBAC has been a big support to me," continued Boston. "[KBAC] helped me start [my catering business], and has helped me establish myself as a worthy person. We want people to know and understand what's going on out here. We're not just about giving picnics and parties all the time, we do things in Kent, we really do and we're a force to be reckoned with."

To date, the most significant action KBAC has taken was when they took long-time Kent City Councilmember Les Thomas to task for refusing to honor a moment of silence during a council meeting for Michael Brown after he was gunned down by a Ferguson, Missouri police officer. In addition, Thomas referred to Brown as an "18-year-old thief" in defense of his not recognizing the moment of silence.

In response to Thomas' public statements about Brown, KBAC organized a rally at the Regional Justice Center in Kent and then marched to City Hall where the City Council was holding their regularly scheduled full council meeting. During the public comment period of the council meeting, where citizens are given three minutes to provide public comment to the council, members of KBAC, one by one, read portions of their statement in its entirety about race relations, their response to Thomas' comments and ultimately demanded a public apology from Thomas and his resignation from the council.

"We not only expressed our consternation for him [Thomas] making those statements, but we educated the city council about slavery, the Black codes, Jim Crow, etc.," said KBAC member Richard Johnson. "We got pushback from one person in the newspaper and we went right back at that and all of a sudden all we heard were crickets."

For Allen-Carston, the message to Thomas, the city council and the city of Kent as a whole was very clear.

"We don't care who you are Les Thomas," said Allen-Carston. "We're not going to stand by and watch you just demean us in any kind of way you think is ok and by that we need a public apology and we're calling for your resignation. We made our statement in opposition to him being [insensitive],

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Clayton Pitre: Latest World War II Profile Added To Legacy Washington



Clayton Pitre. *Photo courtesy of Legacy Washington/Lori Larson.*

OLYMPIA - In its latest World War II profile, Secretary of State Kim Wyman's Legacy Washington team is releasing the little-known story of Clayton Pitre, a Black Montford Point Marine who trained at a segregated base in World War II.

Pitre, a longtime Seattleite, slogged through the mud in the bloodiest battle of the Pacific as a Montford Point Marine, one of the first Black Marines since the Revolution. The Montford Point Marines courageously served their country in a prejudiced America, yet their story is rarely told. Pitre is believed to be among the few survivors in the Pacific Northwest.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt banned discrimination in the Armed Forces 74 years ago, on June 25, 1941. Executive Order 8802 opened the ranks of the U.S. Marine Corps to blacks for the first time since the American Revolution. One of the African-Americans who enlisted was Pitre, a longtime Seattleite and the descendant of slaves and slave owners from the Deep South. Pitre is believed to be one of the last living Marines in the Pacific Northwest who trained at a segregated base in North Carolina in World War II called Montford Point. He is among some 400 survivors in the country.

"Clayton Pitre represents a chapter of World War II history that most people have never heard," Wyman says. "The vast majority of the war's histories do not mention the Montford Point Marines or their contributions in the conflict. In an era of racism, these brave men fought in some of the most vicious battles of the war's Pacific theater."

Pitre and about 20,000 other men broke the color barrier in World War II when they trained at Montford Point. The Montford Point Marines were banned from crossing railroad tracks and leaving the Black section of the camp without a White escort, and prohibited from advancing up the ranks like their White counterparts. Some Montford Point Marines reputedly were arrested by authorities while taking leave. Police had never seen an African-American Marine and took them into custody for impersonating a member of the U.S. Marines Corps.

At Montford Point, Pitre was assigned to the First Marine Ammunition Company, responsible for hauling explosives to the front lines. Pitre saw the aftermath of Pearl Harbor. On April 1, 1945, he landed at Okinawa where he was a decoy and carried ammunition into the heart of battle.

"You think that you may lose it but you've gone this far," Pitre says. "You just hope that it won't happen. I can't describe it. What happens with people is there is something in you. I prayed. I prayed to myself. I prayed that I'd make it. But I saw others who broke. I saw others who broke and they just had to send them back."

After the war, Pitre was discharged from the Marines and moved to Washington state. He is active in Northwest support groups for the Marine Corps today and hopes other Montford Point Marines tell their stories to add to the historical record.

In 2012, Pitre and some 400 Marines were finally honored with the Congressional Gold Medal in Washington, D.C.

Clayton's story is part of a special series, called Washington Remembers, that captures the experiences of World War II veterans who call this state home. The next Legacy Washington profile will be about Fred Shiosaki, a Japanese American who won the Bronze Star and Purple Heart with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, one of the most decorated units in American military history.

On August 20, Legacy Washington will unveil a special exhibit in the Capitol Building that features the World War II veterans profiled online, and more.

KBAC

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and they began to recognize that that [KBAC] ain't playing."

While the organization has engaged in many battles, they are also actively involved in advancing issues of education, economics and political empowerment. They register people to vote at all of their events, and they even have a member of their organization who now sits on the Kent City Council.

The organization meets the fourth Saturday of the month from September to July at the Kent Commons, and they take pride in having an open door policy. They not only encourage people to attend meetings but to bring forth issues that they feel should be addressed.

"A lot of our meetings are driven by actions," says KBAC Board Member Willie Wright. "So if there is something that is happening in the community and where individuals need help on something we don't just stick to the schedule. We'll establish something right then and take a look at it."

While many pundits thought the organization would not last this long, the members of KBAC want people to know that they are here and they are here to stay.

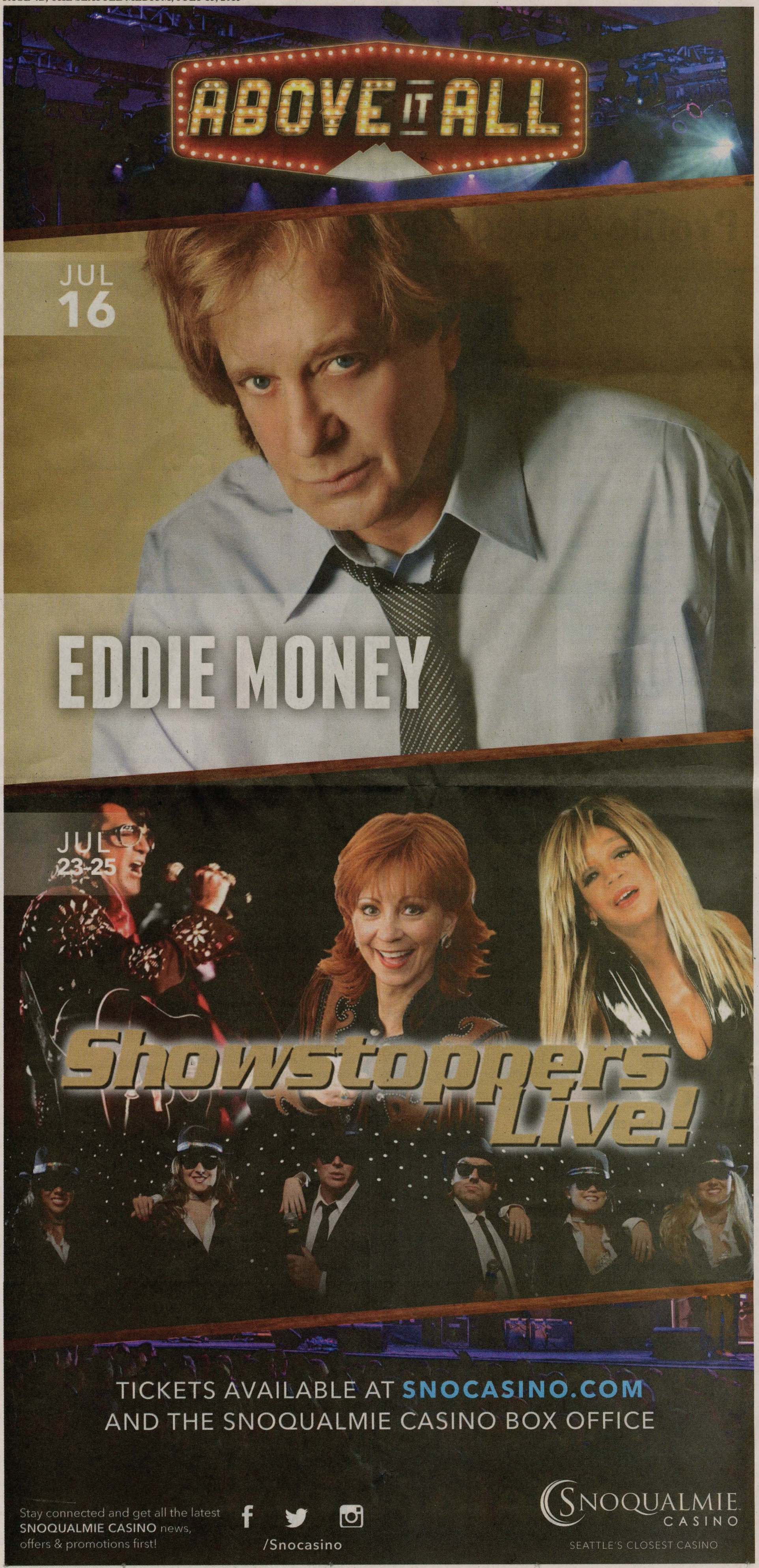
"The name Kent Black Action Commission should not be taken lightly," says Johnson in response to those who would question the name of the organization and use it as an excuse not to participate in their events or efforts to affect positive change in the community. "By us calling ourselves by who we are and the good stuff that we do, we're changing that stereotype that you have and no we won't change our name. You need to get comfortable with coming and helping us."

KBAC Board member Charles Carston couldn't agree more.

"Some folks are afraid of the browning of America, and some folks are afraid of the blackening of Kent," says Carston. "I think we already changed the way Kent looks and it's going to continue to change."

For more information or to contact KBAC, visit their website at www.kent-blackactioncommission.com.

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