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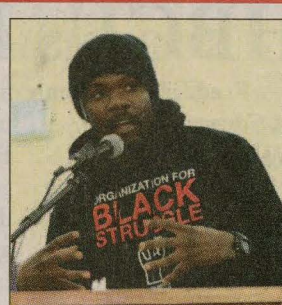
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**Special
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Commemorative
Supplement**

-- See Inside

**MLK Day
Pictorial
Highlights**

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The Seattle Medium

A Message From The People... To The People

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2015

Church Leaders Cite Black Economic Empowerment As 2015 Goal

By Hazel Trice Edney

(Trice Edney Wire) – When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, he and other protestors had won passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Therefore, his agenda had turned toward the next major issue - economic empowerment for Black people.

Therefore, on April 3, 1968, planning a march on behalf of oppressed sanitation workers, Dr. King told preachers at the Mason Temple in Memphis, Tenn., "It's all right to talk about long white robes over yonder, in all of its symbolism. But ultimately people want some suits and dresses and shoes to wear down here!

"It's all right to talk about streets flowing with milk and honey, but God has commanded us to be concerned about the slums down here, and his children who can't eat three square meals a day.

"It's all right to talk about the new Jerusalem, but one day, God's preacher must talk about the new New York, the new Atlanta, the new Philadelphia, the new Los Angeles, the new Memphis, Tennessee. This is what we have to do."

The next day, Dr. King was assassinated.

Nearly 47 years later as America celebrated the King birthday holiday this week, a group of church leaders appears to be carrying out this Black economic empowerment goal in earnest. Invited to speak to a recent gathering of pastors and leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, National Bankers Association President Michael Grant cited the words of human rights champion Paul Robeson:

"We realize that our future lies chiefly in our own hands," Grant quoted. "We know that neither institution nor friends can make a race stand unless it has strength in its own foundation; that races like individuals must stand or fall by their own merit; that to fully succeed they must practice the virtues of self-reliance, self-respect, industry, perseverance, and economy."

Grant continued in his own words: "We played a major role in growing America from a small colonial outpost to the greatest industrial giant the world has ever known. We don't have to argue about our ability to grow wealth. We have made everyone else rich, some filthy rich. Isn't it time that we finally make our efforts productive for ourselves?"

Grant was keynote speaker during a special session on "Economic Development through the Black Church" during the A.M.E. Church's 2nd District Mid-year Opening Plenary Session in Raleigh, N.C. late last year. His speech preceded a panel discussion that also included Marie Johns, former deputy administrator at the Small



National Bankers Association President Michael Grant, U.S. Black Chambers Inc. President Ron Busby, and A.M.E. board member, Rev. Jonathan Weaver discuss a new plan for economic development through the Black Church.

Business Administration; Ron Busby, president/CEO of the National Black Chambers Inc. and Rev. Jonathan Weaver, senior pastor of Greater Mt. Nebo A.M.E. Church in Bowie, Md., and board member of the A.M.E. organization that deals with economic growth and development projects.

Following the forum, Weaver says A.M.E. pastors, led by Bishop William P. DeVeaux, are now poised to carry out a specific plan that they hope will spread to other denominations and ultimately catch fire in other denominations and the Black community throughout 2015.

"Clearly where we are at this point is to actualize and implement what we discussed in Raleigh," said Weaver in an interview. "The whole thrust was how Black churches can help to empower Black businesses."

The starting plan, in a nutshell, is for churches located in the A.M.E. Second District - North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and D.C. - to commit to the support of two Black-owned businesses. They are Thomas Morehead, president of a BMW dealership in Sterling, Va. and Donnell Thompson, co-founder/co-owner of RWDT Foods, Inc., a chain of restaurants based in N. Snellville, Ga.

AME church members buying from those two businesses will cause the churches to benefit from those sales; then identify other businesses in and around the states and "replicate this process", Weaver described. After tracking the sales, initiated by the churches, the hope is that other church districts will get involved and that the movement will spread to other businesses and other churches.

"And we certainly hope and pray that this will become a much larger Black faith effort and we will reach out to the Baptist community, the Church of God and Christ and the list goes on," Weaver said. "If we're able to affect a significant change in terms of relationship with Black businesses, can you imagine if we're able to boost their profit

margin and therefore they are going to have to hire more people and therefore they will be reaching back to the faith community. More people will have jobs, they will have better jobs; therefore there will be less frustration, economically, in our community."

So far, the congregations have been receptive to the idea, Weaver said. "Quite frankly, I've not met any resistance thus far."

In his speech, Grant reminded the audience that a legacy of Black economic develop was at the core of the founding of the A.M.E. Church.

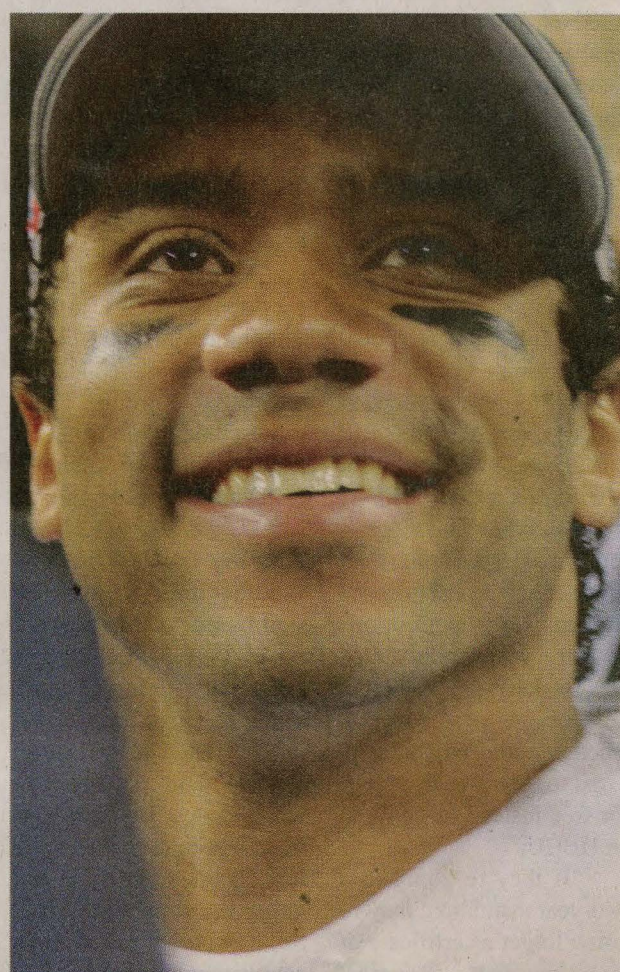
"I agree with that great A.M.E. historiographer, Dr. Dennis C. Dickerson, who said that the history of the African Methodist Episcopal Church - founded - by Bishop Richard Allen - reflects the black liberationist narrative of African - American history," Grant said. "Nearly eight decades before the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, Allen, a free man, was already promoting Black economic development. So it is fitting that we come to his church today with an urgent message: The time for Americans of African descent to take our place at the roundtable of economic opportunity is now. With each passing day, the price of not having a well - thought out economic agenda for Black America continues to extract a toll and degrade our position in this country and throughout the diaspora."

Grant, who last year received the U. S. Department of Commerce's Lifetime Achievement Award for his Black business advocacy, ticked off statistics that undergird the need for an economic movement to support Black-owned businesses and Black-owned banks:

There are currently 1.9 million Black-owned businesses in America, but only about one in 20 have more than one employee and less than 2 percent have annual gross receipts of more than \$1,000,000.

In terms of relative wealth, White America is 20 times richer
(Cont'd. On Page 2A)

Seahawks Return To Superbowl With Miraculous Overtime Win Over Packers



Seattle Seahawk quarterback Russell Wilson threw four interceptions before leading the Seahawks to an overtime win over the Green Bay Packers in the NFC championship game last Sunday.

Receiver Jermaine Kearse caught a 35-yard touchdown pass from Seahawk quarterback Russell Wilson with 3:19 left in overtime as the Seahawks posted a 28-22 comeback victory over the Green Bay Packers in the NFC championship game last Sunday at CenturyLink Stadium.

The Seahawks, who struggled on offense throughout most of the game, trailed Green Bay 19 - 7 with just under four minutes left in the fourth quarter, when they put together a late game rally started by a 1-yard touchdown run by Wilson with 2:09 left. The touchdown was set up by passes by Wilson to receiver Doug Baldwin and running back Marshawn Lynch.

The Seahawks' then got another break, as receiver Chris Mathews recovered an onside kick on the ensuing kickoff at the 50 yard line. Lynch then put the Seahawks ahead for the first time in the game, as he scored on a 24-yard touchdown run. Wilson then connected with tight end Luke Wilson on a two-point conversion to give the Seahawks a 22-19 lead with 1:25 remaining.

Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers led the Packers down field to set-up a 48 yard field goal by kicker Mason Crosby to tie the game at 22-22 and send the game into overtime.

In overtime, Seattle won the coin toss and won the game on Wilson's pass to Kearse.

Wilson threw four interceptions on the day, while Marshawn Lynch carried the ball 25 times for 157 yards.

The Seahawk defense came up big time and time again, as they forced the Packers to settle for four field goals prior to the late game rally, despite the Packers being in scoring positions numerous times throughout the day.

Seattle cornerback Richard Sherman and safety Earl Thomas both showed their grit as they both played through arm injuries that saw both of them literally playing with one arm.

The Seahawks will now face the New England Patriots in Super Bowl 49 on Feb. 1

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HBCUs Divided Over Free Community College Plan

By Freddie Allen
NNPA Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Black college educators and supporters are sharply split over whether President Obama’s proposal to offer a free two-year community college education to students making progress toward earning an associate or bachelor’s degree would hurt are harm Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Lezli Baskerville, president and CEO of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), a nonprofit network of HBCUs and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), including community colleges, said that for students who have a gap in funding or choose to go to a two-year institution and don’t have adequate funding, America’s College Promise would create another opportunity for them.

“We are trying to make sure that students that want to go and get a technical certification or some training to get their foot in the door, can do that,” said Baskerville. “We also want to incentivize and facilitate students who want to get a four-year degree doing that, especially low-income students for whom options are very, very limited.”

Baskerville said that the jury is still out on whether a student would opt to go to a two-year college for free instead of going to an HBCU.

“If they’re going to a two-year institution, they’re going to get a certificate or a two-year degree, something to get them

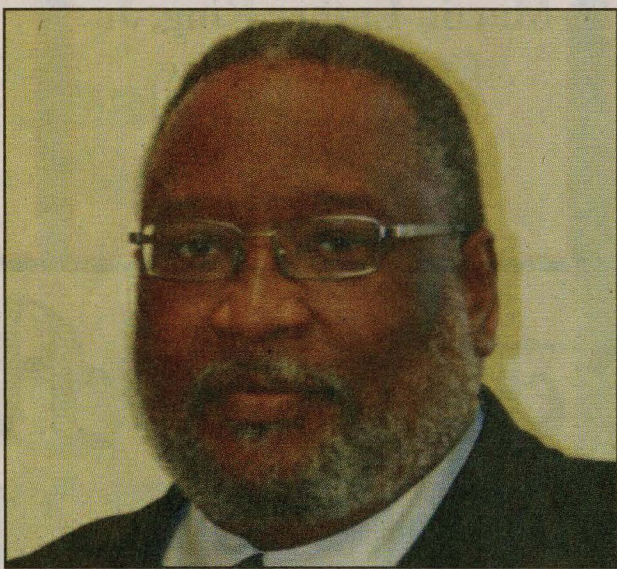
market-ready or entrepreneurship-ready,” explained Baskerville. “If they’re going to a four-year HBCU they’re going because they appreciate the ethos of historic Black colleges that are built on the traditions of the African American community of family, faith, fellowship, service and social justice.”

However, Lester C. Newman, president of Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, Texas, believes HBCUs will pay a price.

“They are going to suffer,” he said. “Not too many schools can operate with just the third and fourth level, especially four-year institutions that don’t have graduate programs. You don’t get the research dollars that can help sustain you. You rely on students being there from their freshman to their senior year. But if you are going to lose a great portion of those students for the first two years, you really will have to change your model, your business plan.”

Johnny Taylor, president and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, an education advocacy group that represents about 300,000 students and 47 member colleges and universities, agrees.

“My fear is a real one and that this is going to significantly, negatively impact private HBCUs and I think it’s going to have some negative impact on public HBCUs,” he said. “Mama and Daddy are going to say, ‘If you can go to community college for free, that’s where you are going the first two years.’ So, what you have essentially done is cut in half the revenue for private



Jarvis Christian College President Lester C. Newman is concerned that free community college could hurt private HBCUs.

HBCUs. Private HBCUs are going to feel this in a way you can’t even imagine.”

Taylor said he supports President Obama’s overall goal of providing free college assistance, but thinks it should be done in a manner that would be less harmful to HBCUs.

The United Negro College Fund (UNCF), which represents private HBCUs, has not issued a statement on the community college proposal.

As educators and HBCU advocates debate whether the program will have a disparate impact on Black schools, Toldson argued that enrollment at HBCUs has already taken a hit, because of state-level policy choices.

Toldson used Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., as an example. Toldson said that when he taught at the school in 2005, there were 10,000 students enrolled and over the last decade that number has dwindled to 6,000. Over the same period, Toldson said that community college attendance increased to about 9,000 students.

But Toldson said that the fall in enrollment at Southern University had more to do with changes in admission requirements that affected all state universities in Louisiana than direct competition from community colleges in the region. Toldson said that new guidelines barred Southern University from admitting students that scored less than 20 on their

ACT exams.

“The average ACT score is 16 in Louisiana, so you could imagine how many Black students could not go to Southern because of that change,” said Toldson. “So, they had to go to a community college or whatever college would accept them.”

According to data collected by the ACT program, Black graduating high school seniors scored an average of 17 on the exam in 2014, compared to White students who scored 22.3 on average.

“By 2020, an estimated 35 percent of job openings will require at least a bachelor’s degree and 30 percent will require some college or an associate’s degree,” White House officials said. “Forty percent of college students are enrolled at one of America’s more than 1,100 community colleges, which offer students affordable tuition, open admission policies, and convenient locations.”

Seventy-five percent of the funding for the proposal, called “America’s College Promise” will come from the federal government with participating states contributing the rest of the money needed to cover tuition costs. White House officials estimate that the program will cost the federal government \$60 billion over 10 years, if all states participate.

Nearly all of the HBCUs are in states where Republicans control the legislature and the

governor’s mansion. Getting them – or the Republican majority in the House and Senate – to buy into President Obama’s vision will likely be an uphill battle.

As President Newman noted, spending on higher education is already being cut by most states.

“Of course, you support any opportunity where people can go to school for free,” he said. “The details are what I am concerned about. I don’t see them adding any money to higher education, just redirecting funds. This program will take away funds from private schools. Any proposal that does that is going to hurt us tremendously.”

Baskerville also noted that going to a two-year institution is not the most direct route for anyone who wants to get a four-year bachelor’s degree.

According to federal statistics, only 7.5 percent of Black students who pursue a two-year associate degree full-time finish within three years and about 40 percent of Black students who earn bachelor’s degrees finish in six years. Those rates plummet when a student is only able to attend part-time, often burdened by work or family obligations.

Ivory Toldson, the deputy director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, said that community colleges currently educate more Black students than any other single sector, partly because of limited financial resources.

“Having a program that allows them to cut that financial barrier altogether to go into an institution that can help prepare them for an associate’s degree or to transfer to a four-year college, I think is a worthwhile program,” said Toldson.

The Journal for Blacks in Higher Education reported that, “Only 34 percent of Black students who took the ACT test were deemed ready for college-level English courses. This is less than half the rate for White students who took the ACT. Only 14 percent of

Black ACT test takers were deemed college ready in mathematics compared to 52 percent of White ACT test takers.”

Whether community college students will be less likely to enroll in an HBCU after the first two years in another setting is being hotly debated. Regardless of the outcome, Black colleges are looking at a new reality.

Newman said that even before President Obama’s announcement, Jarvis was studying whether to award students associate degrees upon satisfactory completion of the first two years. Now that examination will be accelerated.

“We’re going to have to change our model,” he explained. “I don’t know if we have to play the associate degree game. We will have a need for greater articulation agreements with those community colleges that get those students.”

Other approaches will also be needed.

Baskerville said NAFEO is already working with The Links Inc., an international professional women’s group, to pair HBCUs with two-year community colleges in their service area in an effort to provide students with the experience of attending a four-year institution as they earn college credits at the local community college.

White House officials hope that taking the costs of tuition off the table for two-years will help to ease some of those burdens, possibly improving graduation rates in the process.

If the president’s plan results in fewer students attending HBCUs, that could have a ripple effect. For example, physicians, dentists and other professionals who attend HBCUs are much more likely to return to Black communities to practice than graduates of non-Black colleges.

Referring to the Obama community college proposal, Newman said, “It’s going to change how we operate in higher education. Whether that’s good or bad, we don’t know yet.”

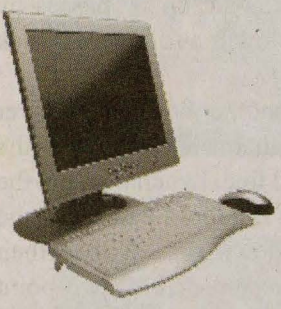
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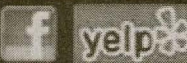
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Church Leaders

Continued From Front Page

than Black America, according to a recent Pew Report.

In the 1960’s, we had 60 Black-owned banks. Today, that number has dwindled to only 30. What is insane about this tragic loss is this: The bank is the only institution in our community that can leverage or multiply dollars 7, 8, 9 or 10 times. That means for every \$1,000,000 dollars of invested capital in these banks, they are able to loan out 7, 8, 9 or \$10 million for economic development, business growth and job creation.

Grant said African-Americans lost significant ground in business ownership after integration, largely because African-Americans were no longer forced to support each other.

“As long as we were forced to trade with each other and barter with each other, our businesses (small as they were) thrived. But in our minds, we were never quite good enough.

We had internalized the lie about our lack of inherent worth,” he said. “When the doors of integration gave us the long – awaited pass to wine and dine with our former oppressors, we enthusiastically abandoned our own in search of an elusive White acceptance. We believed then – and many of us still do – that association would bring on assimilation.”

Dr. King concluded on April 3, 1968, the eve of his assassination: “We’ve got to stay together and maintain unity. You know, whenever Pharaoh wanted to prolong the period of slavery in Egypt, he had a favorite, favorite formula for doing it. What was that? He kept the slaves fighting among themselves. But whenever the slaves get together, something happens in Pharaoh’s court, and he cannot hold the slaves in slavery. When the slaves get together, that’s the beginning of getting out of slavery. Now let us maintain unity.”

seattlemedium.com

Five Things To Know About Lawmakers' Efforts On Marijuana

By Gene Johnson

Associated Press

(AP) - Medical marijuana activists feel like they have their back to the wall as the Legislature tries to rein in an unregulated system that many people believe is unfairly competing with heavily taxed recreational pot sales in Washington state. Hundreds are expected in Olympia on Thursday as lawmakers hold their first big hearing on the topic

this session.

Kari Boiter, Washington state coordinator with Americans for Safe Access, says there's been a lot of talk recently that medical dispensaries are merely fronts for black market marijuana sales, that they endanger patients with untested cannabis or that they're taking advantage of the state by not paying taxes. But many serve people who need the medicine,

voluntarily test their products and pay taxes that are applicable to them, including sales taxes.

"There are a lot of legitimate patients in this state," Boiter said. "If lawmakers don't believe they exist, we need to get those people in front of them. We want a regulated system for medical marijuana."

Here are five things to know as lawmakers attempt to reconcile medical and recreational marijuana.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Washington's adult-use marijuana sales, authorized by Initiative 502, have brought in more than \$17 million in taxes since stores opened last July, but officials think the state could have garnered even more if the stores weren't competing with untaxed or much-lesser-taxed sales at medical dispensaries. As

long as the medical shops remain unregulated, there's little incentive for people who have been using them for recreational purposes to switch into the legal-pot system, where for now the weed costs about twice as much.

That said, lawmakers also don't want to hurt people suffering from cancer, multiple sclerosis or other serious conditions by making it harder or more expensive for them to get marijuana. The trick is to protect those patients while reining in what many see as abuses of the system, and it's no easy task.

"We need to get the two systems functioning as one," Senate Majority Leader Mark Schoesler, R-Ritzville, said recently.

WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED?

There are at least two major approaches under consideration. On

Thursday, the Senate's Health Care Committee holds a hearing on the Cannabis Patient Protection Act, a bill proposed by Republican Sen. Ann Rivers of La Center that takes a novel tack: It would create stand-alone medical marijuana dispensaries that can't sell dried marijuana — just edibles and concentrates, like hash oil — on the theory that smoking marijuana is bad for sick people. It would require testing that's at least as strict as that for recreational pot.

Among its other tenets: that "collective gardens" of marijuana patients need to be severely curtailed; that there needs to be a registry of medical marijuana patients and providers; and that the Department of Health should determine the strength of products sold in medical shops.

The other major bill hasn't yet been introduced, but Democratic Seattle Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles said she is contemplating getting rid of medical dispensaries and authorizations altogether. Instead, any shop that meets requirements could be licensed to sell pot for either purpose, with tax breaks offered on marijuana products targeted toward medical use. The statewide cap on licensed pot shops — 334 — would be lifted, allowing as many as the market can bear, an idea that might have limited support in much of the state.

Kohl-Welles would also eliminate collective gardens, allow home growing of up to six plants, and reduce excise taxes on recreational pot from a 25 percent tax applied up to three times, to a 25 percent tax applied once in hopes of making state-sanctioned marijuana more competitive with the black market.

WHAT DO PATIENTS THINK?

Advocates say they're not opposed to being regulated — in fact, they've wanted it for a long time. Washington passed its medical marijuana law in 1998, but it only allowed for patients to grow their own marijuana or designate someone to grow it for them — not terribly practical for many patients. They pushed for a bill to create a system of licensed dispensaries in 2011, but then-Gov. Chris Gregoire vetoed many of the relevant parts.

There are ideas in both Kohl-Welles' and Rivers' approaches that appeal to patients. But they largely object to having medical stores that don't sell dried marijuana. Boiter noted that research does not support the idea that cannabis smoke is harmful the way tobacco smoke is. Dried bud can be used in a vaporizer, and some patients prefer it to stronger concentrates and edibles.

Many patients also consider the creation of a registry of patients and caregivers — basically a

database of people involved in federal crimes — to be problematic. Instead, Alison Holcomb, the author of Washington's legal pot law, has suggested that the distinction between medical and recreational shops be erased, as Kohl-Welles has proposed.

WHY DON'T PATIENTS JUST GO TO LICENSED RECREATIONAL STORES?

The cost, for one thing, and access, for another. There are thus far relatively few legal stores, just 85 or so statewide. Many cities and some counties have banned pot businesses, saying they don't want to accommodate them when local governments don't get to share in the state's marijuana tax revenue. Lawmakers are considering addressing this by giving cities and counties a slice of the revenue — but only if they agree to allow the businesses in their jurisdictions.

Another hindrance are the buffer zones required of recreational shops: They have to be 1,000 feet from schools, playgrounds and transit centers, among other things.

If patients are using public transit, "you're asking them to walk three football fields to get to that store," Boiter said.

Another reason is the choice of product, Boiter says: The recreational shops don't specialize in offering transdermal cannabis patches, tinctures or topical creams favored by some patients.

WHAT DO RECREATIONAL POT DEALERS WANT OUT OF THIS?

A number of recreational-pot entrepreneurs have backgrounds in medical marijuana, and say patients need to be protected as the state moves forward. But they're also in business, and they need to make money.

And that means they want to drive more pot users into licensed shops. While regular marijuana users are sticking with medical dispensaries or black market dealers, they say, their main customers are tourists and the occasional cannabis user who can afford steeply taxed products.

The Washington Cannabis Business Association, a new group of licensed pot businesses, had input as Rivers' drafted her bill.

"What we really like about it is it ensures that patients have access to safe products — that's number one," said the group's executive director, Vicki Christophersen. "The second goal is to ensure regulatory certainty and a level playing field for I-502 and medicinal. I-502 stores are struggling to compete right now with what is essentially a black market."

S.A.K.S. Salon

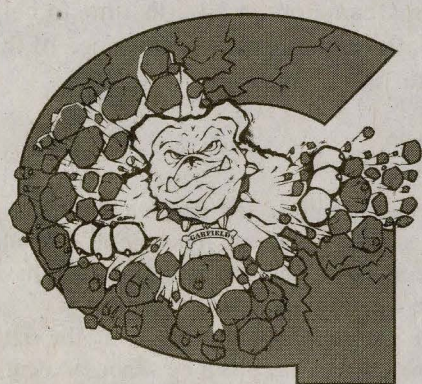
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EDITORIALS • COMMENTS • OPINIONS

A Boost For The American Dream

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Columnist

About 800,000 homeowners whose mortgages were backed by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) could save \$900 annually on mortgage costs, due to a small reduction in mortgage insurance (MI) premiums. President Barack Obama made the announcement in a recent speech in Phoenix, one of the cities hardest hit by the nation’s housing crisis.

By reducing the MI rate by only a half-percent, the move is also expected to enable 250,000 new homebuyers to afford an FHA mortgage. Administration officials predict that in coming years, the fee reduction will save borrowers with similarly-financed mortgages billions of dollars and also boost the housing market’s long-term recovery.

In his address, the president connected the financial concerns of everyday people to his new initiative designed to spur broader housing recovery.

“It’s not just the economy turning around,” said President Obama. “It’s turning around the lives of hardworking people. . . . Buying a home has always been about more than owning a roof and four walls. It’s about investing savings, and building a family.”

The move is also likely to benefit consumers of color who tend to secure FHA-backed mortgages far more than private, conventional ones. In 2013, the most recent mortgage data available from the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, although conventional mortgage originations rose slightly from the previous year, 2012, Black consumers nationwide received only 2.3 percent or 36,903 loans. In 2012, the same data point was even smaller, with only 26,500 such

loans.

To add some context to this low number of private, conventional mortgages, the Chicago suburb of Calumet City with a population of 37,240 is larger than the number of loans made to the nation’s Black homebuyers last year.

Typically, 30-year conventional mortgages are free from mortgage insurance premiums when home down payments are 20 percent or larger. Over the course of the loan, these are the mortgages that wind up costing borrowers less money.

By contrast, borrowers who can afford a monthly mortgage payment but only have a low down payment have frequently turned to FHA. One term on these government-backed loans is to charge a mortgage insurance premium. Housing and consumer advocates were swift to praise the president’s announcement.

Mike Calhoun, Center for Responsible Lending (CRL) president said, “This decision is financially sound, socially responsible, and good policy all at once. Homebuyers, homeowners and taxpayers will all benefit.”

Similarly, Julia Gordon, Director of Housing Finance and Policy at the Center for American Progress, noted, “The president correctly observes that owning a house is about far more than putting a roof over your head. It’s also about stability and community for you and your kids – creating a place to call home. What’s more, for many families, homeownership builds wealth that can be passed down for generations.”

Yet, not all housing stakeholders were in

agreement. In a prepared statement issued on the heels of the president’s address, the U.S. Mortgage Insurers issued a statement that, in part, said, “Mortgage insurers putting their own capital at risk should be preferred to government risk taking, consistent with the principles put forward by the Administration for housing reform. The MI industry has the capacity and capability to further reduce taxpayer risk and lower costs for many home buyers while expanding access to mortgage credit.”

While this segment of the housing industry may have the capacity to lower costs for many prospective homebuyers, the post-recession consumer experience did not translate into more mortgage access. The combination of higher pricing for lower-wealth borrowers, along with historically-tight credit standards dramatically limited access to homeownership for low to moderate-income borrowers and continued to pose a serious challenge to the mortgage market as a whole.

Limiting home purchase opportunities also has larger economic consequences. New homeowners fuel consumer spending, especially on big-ticket appliances. These major purchases then enhance local governments’ ability to deliver services as a result of higher sales tax revenues.

Most importantly, lost opportunities for homeownership means fewer families will have the opportunity to have that investment build wealth to pass down across generations.

As President Obama observed, it is time to help “more families afford having their own piece of the American Dream.”

Is Obama Trying To Kill Black Colleges? (Part II)

By George E. Curry
NNPA Columnist

Few things irk me more than hearing someone say or imply that now that we have a Black president, perhaps the time has come to abolish Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). I have zero tolerance for such ignorance.

HBCUs are being held to a different standard than other universities that target certain communities. Because Jews and Catholics were refused admission or subjected to quotas at major universities, they established their own institutions. That’s why we have the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. and the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. for Catholics.

Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. says on its website that it was “founded in 1948 by members of the American Jewish community.” Like HBCUS, these schools did not restrict enrollment to Catholics or Jews. HBCUs have always welcomed White students and faculty members on campus.

The belief that we should pay our respect, have a proper funeral and send our Black colleges off to a graveyard for relics simply because Barack Obama is president is preposterous. In 1960, John F. Kennedy was elected president amid questions of whether America was ready to elect its first Catholic president. JFK won but no one declared that it ushered in an era of post-religious bigotry. No one said, “Now that we have elected a Catholic as president, Notre Dame and Holy Cross have outlived their usefulness.” If universities established because of religious bigotry have not outlived their usefulness, why should HBCUs be put out to pasture?

There are 106 accredited HBCUs, 47 of them public.

According to the White House Initiative on HBCUs, Black colleges award more than 35,000 degrees each year. In Mississippi, HBCUs handed out 37 percent of the degrees awarded to African Americans in the state, followed by Louisiana (36 percent), North Carolina (34 percent), Arkansas (31 percent), Maryland (25 percent) Alabama and South Carolina (23 percent each), Tennessee (19 percent), Georgia (18 percent), Texas (13 percent) and Florida (9 percent).

As Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in a speech last September, “Too many Americans are unfamiliar with the staggering accomplishments of HBCUs. Most of America’s civil rights giants were educated at HBCUs – Dr. King, W.E.B. DuBois, Rosa Parks, Booker T. Washington, and Thurgood Marshall.

“In our time, Jesse Jackson, Andy Young, Barbara Jordan, Congressman John Lewis, Marian Wright Edelman, and Doug Wilder all earned their degrees at HBCUs. Legendary artists and authors came out of HBCUs – Ralph Ellison, Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, and Toni Morrison.

“Yet what is most impressive about the HBCU record is not just your famous alumni. It is that HBCUs, working with meager resources, almost single-handedly created an African-American professional class in the face of decades of Jim Crow discrimination.”

Duncan continued, “Even, more than a half-century after the demise of Jim Crow laws, HBCUs continue to have an outsized impact in educating Black professionals. We have over 7,000 institutions of higher education across the country, 106 of which are HBCUs. But in 2010, HBCUs still awarded a sixth of all bachelor degrees and professional degrees earned by African Americans in the U.S.”

At a time, when its projected that we won’t have enough college graduates to meet our future needs, it would be foolhardy to diminish a pool of institutions that have proven their value over the years.

While the Obama administration is saying the right things, HBCUs are approaching death by a thousand cuts.

Pell grants were reduced by Congress in 2011, making students eligible for 12 semesters instead of 18. That will hurt Black students who, on average, take longer to complete their undergraduate education.

Without consulting HBCUs, the Obama administration made changes in the Parent PLUS loans three years ago that made it more difficult for parents with less than stellar credit to obtain a loan. By some estimates, that change, which has since been modified, caused up to 20 percent drop in enrollment at HBCUs.

And now the proposal for the federal government to pay for the first two years of community college, a move that is certain to harm HBCUs. It would have been better to offer to pick up the tab for the first two years at any public university.

Some Black college presidents are reluctant to criticize the proposal publicly for fear of falling in disfavor with the White House. The head of some higher ed organization are carefully picking their words because they represent community colleges as well as HBCUs. And some people are hiding behind the time-worn excuse, “the devil is in the details.” In this case, the community college proposal represents the devil for the continued existence of HBCUs. And because we have our first Black president or have other conflict of interests, not too many people have the temerity to say it.

As one educator told me privately, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. must be rolling over in his grave.

World Is Indifferent To Missing Nigerian Girls

By Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

One could not help but be impressed by the millions that turned out in Paris to stand against the Islamist terrorists who killed workers at the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and four others at a kosher grocery store. Two law enforcement officers were also killed, bringing the total to 17.

About 40 heads of state and more than a million others crowded into Republique Square; even more rallied around France. In total, it is estimated that 3.7 rallied for freedom. They wore shirts and carried signs that said, “I am Charlie.” Some said, “I am Muslim and Charlie” or “I am Jewish and Charlie.” Those crowds transcended race, religious and political lines.

President Obama got mixed reaction to his not attending the solidarity rally. Ambassador to France Jane Hartley, someone with much less status, represented the United States. Critics said the president could at least have sent Vice President Joe Biden; Attorney General Eric H. Holder was in Paris and could have attended. The president may be doing something much more substantive by convening a summit on world terrorism at the White House in February.

I wonder if these gatherings will address terror in Nigeria, where the Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram abducted 276 girls, and still holds 219. A hashtag campaign, #BringBackOurGirls was joined by First Lady Michelle Obama, former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, British Prime Minister David Cameron and others. Few of the 40 who rallied in Paris have ever mentioned the abducted girls and

those terrorists who took them. Indeed, the abducted girls have all but disappeared from the headlines and from the public consciousness.

The girls were abducted on April 14, 2014. Since then, our attention has been riveted by other news from the African continent, as the Ebola virus killed thousands (we in the U.S. were mostly focused on our handful of casualties), and as ISIS has escalated its activity around the globe. While some have forgotten about the Nigerian girls, many have not. Obiageli Ezekwesili, a former Nigerian government official who is now vice president of the World Bank’s Africa Division, has been among those continuing to focus attention on the girls.

People fear that Boko Haram may have sold the schoolgirls into slavery, forced some into marriage, or killed others. Given the fact that Amnesty International, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the UN Security Council have decried the Islamist militant terrorist group, it is alarming that the world community has been so indifferent to the plight of the abducted young girls. Some of the indifference does not start with the world, but in Nigeria. Will Goodluck Jonathan, the Nigerian president who is running for reelection, mention the girls at all before February, when voting takes place? Or, has the fate of 219 kidnapped girls been forgotten?

Demonstrations have taken place daily in Abuja, Nigeria’s capital, despite the fact that the police have ordered these demonstrations to stop. Meanwhile, Boko Haram continues its terrorist plundering in Nigeria, destroying villages and towns in the northeast part of the country and killing thousands. It

is estimated that they have destroyed more than 3,700 structures – homes, churches, and public spaces. Tens of thousands of Nigerians have fled to bordering Chad because they fear for their lives.

I don’t know if it would be effective for world leaders to rally in Abuja to pressure Boko Haram to return the girls. I don’t know if T-shirts or signs saying, “We Are the Nigerian Girls” would do much more than direct attention back to these young students whose hopes and dreams have been stomped on by irrational terrorists. I don’t know if it would make a difference if Nigerians all over the world came together to demand return of the girls. I don’t know the efforts of feminists around the world would make a difference.

I do know that about 219 Nigerian girls are gone, and a terrorist group is responsible for taking them. I know that they are reputed to be affiliated with Al-Qaeda and with ISIS. I know that while the world has rallied to show solidarity in the fight against terrorism in France, there has been no such gathering to show solidarity in the fight against terrorism in Nigeria. I don’t know (and I might be misinformed) if offers to help contain or eliminate Boko Haram have been made by the world community.

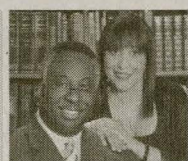
The war against terrorism has been embraced in Paris, with millions there, and thousands in the rest of the world, taking it to the streets to express their outrage. Where is the outrage for the more than 200 Nigerian girls? Nine months after they have been snatched from their school, who remembers? Who cares?



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Morning Worship 11:00 AM
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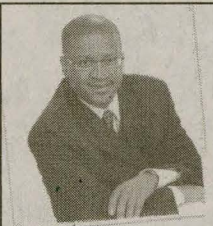
Church School...9:30am
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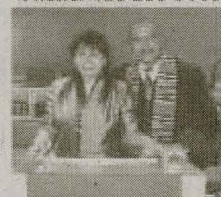
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Rev. Herbert J. Carey, Pastor

Service Times

Sunday

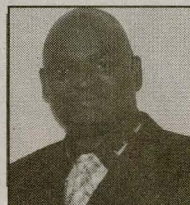
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Sunday School 9:15
Morning Service - 11:00 AM

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Thomas R. Martin Jr.,
Minister

Schedule of Services

Sunday

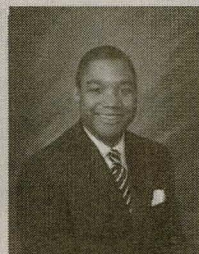
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Morning Worship 10:30AM
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Wednesday

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- 2) Wednesday, February 11th : "Moving Forward : Helping Seniors and Young People Relocate, Downsize, and Declutter with Ease."
- 3) Wednesday, February 18th : "Ways to Prevent Being a Victim of Identity Theft and Fraud Scams with AARP Fraud Watch Network."

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, Seattle, WA. 98144. Reverend Dr. Robert L. Manaway, Sr., Senior Pastor and Evangelist Jessica Perine-Manaway, Overseer.

Church Announcement Policy:

The Seattle Medium accepts church announcements on a weekly basis. All announcements are due two weeks prior to your event. All announcements on this page are broadcast on The Heaven Bound Train every Sunday on KZIZ 1560 AM, KRIZ 1420 AM and KYIZ 1620 AM.

All church announcements heard on the radio must originate in The Seattle Medium.

All fees for church announcements must be submitted prior to them being published. For more information contact the Church Editor, Joan Owens at 206-323-3070 ...email: mediumads@aol.com.

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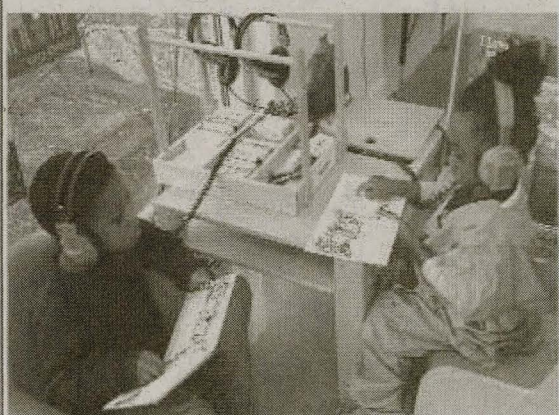
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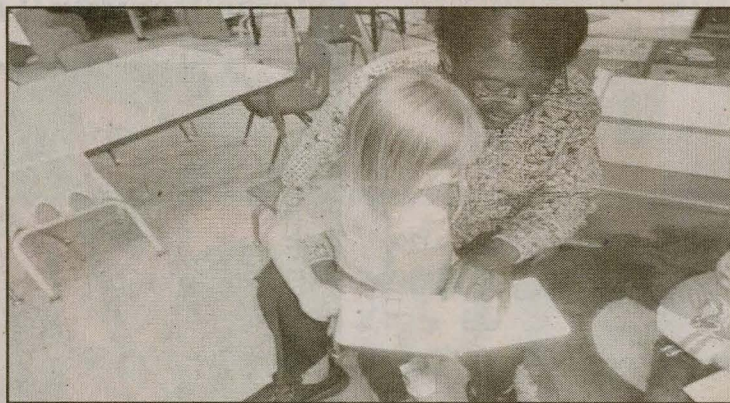
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LOCATION OF CONTRACT DOCUMENTS - Current plans, specifications, bid packages and bid forms can be accessed: Builders Exchange at www.bxwa.com. (Click on: Posted Projects, General Contractor - Project Areas, WA, Walsh Construction Co. Seattle, Select Projects. Username: walsh Password: walshprm).

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-D.L. Hughley

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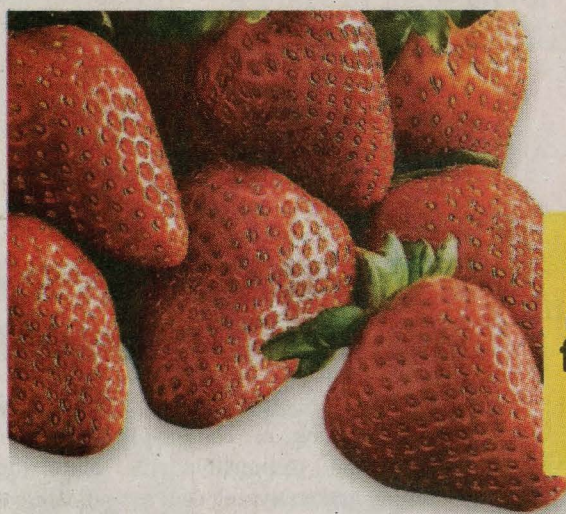
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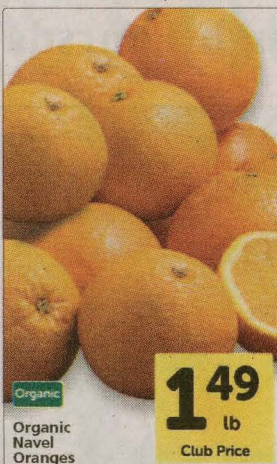
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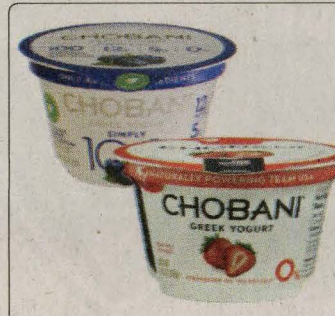
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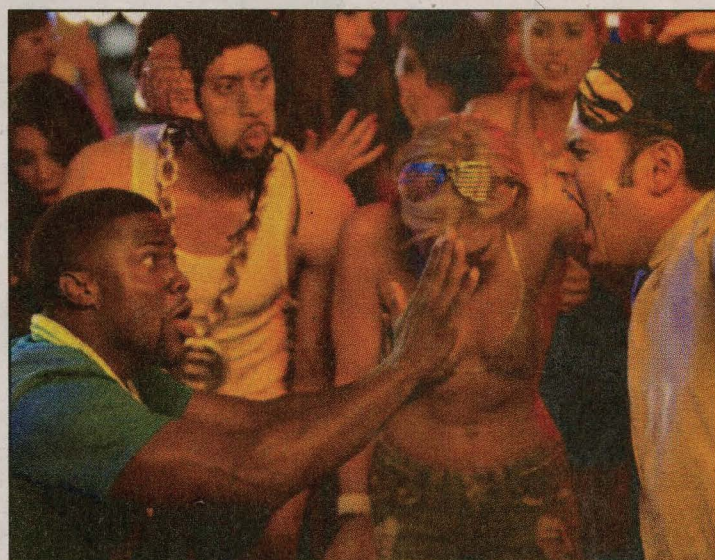
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ENTERTAINMENT

Movie Review: The Wedding Ringer



Kevin Hart and Josh Gad star comedy/satire "The Wedding Ringer."

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

In a now infamously leaked email, Screen Gems President Clint Culpepper called comedian Kevin Hart a "whore" because he wanted him to use his huge social media following to promote Think Like A Man Too, and Hart wouldn't do it without being paid more money. Kevin politely responded in the press, "Knowing your self worth is extremely important people... I look at myself as a brand and because of that I will never allow myself to be taken advantage of."

Culpepper was wrong. Hart isn't a "whore," he's just "prolific" and good at what he does. He pumps out three to four movies a year like he's puppy mill. Single-handily, he turns mediocre movies into a comedy event. He earns his paycheck. Don't hate the player, hate the game!

Doug (Josh Gad, Thanks for Sharing) is a pudgy, four-eyed well-to-do businessman who has landed a dyed-blond, gold-digging fiancée (Kaley Cuoco-Sweeting, TV's The Big Bang Theory) who is way out of his league. Their wedding day is two weeks away and the loser has no best man, no groomsmen and not one friend who'll accept an invitation to his nuptials. Someone pulls his coattails and turns him on to a professional "Best Man." Jim Callahan (Hart) is the proud, but clandestine owner/CEO of Best Man, Inc. He can rock a wedding with a phony, teary-eyed reception toast, fawning rent-a-groomsmen and a happy ending release.

Writer/director Jeremy Garelick (The Break Up) marks his feature filmmaking debut with this sketchy story that could go in either direction: ribald comedy, or flat formulaic bomb. He's got just enough of a plotline to sustain a 90-minute film. However, his movie runs 101 minutes. Surprisingly, he keeps the proceedings going at a nice pace and you don't get bored. In part, that's because of his nimble writing and direction. Also, his cast breathes life into the characters, interprets the dialogue with zest and knows how to work the sensitive moments, which are thoughtfully interspersed among the dull ones.

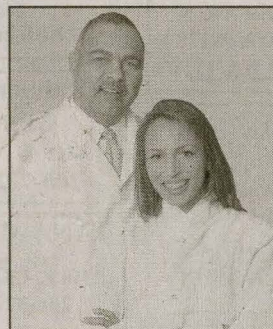
Garelick's filmmaking peaks in three key sequences: One, a wedding dance scene with Gad and Hart doing their well-coordinated interpretation of "The Dougie." Two, a hard-fought tackle football game that pits Doug's arrogant, chest-pumping father-in-law (Ken Howard, TV's The White Shadow) and his senior citizens crew against Doug, Jimmy and the fake groomsmen ("They look like the cast of Goonies grew up to be rapists."). Three, a bachelor party that involves a Basset Hound, peanut butter and unprotected testicles. (Ouch! Don't ask, don't tell!)

Jennifer Lewis plays Jimmy's sage and sassy secretary, and her self-assuredness is comical and motherly. Jorge Garcia (TV's Lost), Affion Crockett (A Haunted House) and Aaron Takahashi, as three of the for-hire male entourage, raise a chuckle. Josh Gad goes toe-to-toe up with Hart on the dance floor and in every scene. Hart, with his usual impish charm, manhandles the dialogue, works the character into a frenzy and smiles in such an endearing way you want to give him all the money in your pocket. Gad and Hart have chemistry, but someone tell Gad, it ain't a real bromance. Hart is moving on to his next comic pairing, real soon. (Get Hard with Will Ferrell opens in March.)

The Wedding Ringer isn't innovative, but ultimately it's a crowd-pleasing movie. Hart, with his command of social media, will get fans in theater seats. Garelick's writing/direction coupled with the cast's high jinks will keep audiences laughing. But folks keep in mind, though Kevin Hart is not a "whore," he isn't marriage material either. This is just a hook up. A comedy booty call. A pretty good one.

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