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Minority Opportunity News



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VOLUME 6, NO. 3 March 1997



Islam:

Is it on the rise?

**Charter Schools:
The new
alternative?**

**Yvonne Gonzalez
gives "State of
DISD" address**

**Ethnic Notes
Concludes "Blacks
In Television" Series**



From The Editor

Chris Pryer

photo by Derrick Walters

Editorial

Grunt work in the trenches

If you were to use the terms "in the trenches" or "grunt work," you would be hard-pressed to find someone who didn't understand what you were talking about. No matter what kind of task being undertaken—construction work, academic endeavors, clerical duties, political machinations, family relationships—the terms "grunt work" and "in the trenches" connote the basic actions and duties necessary to get things done.

This is the work of your basic foot soldier. No matter how smart and innovative the decision-makers are, it's the common workers that make it happen. Grunt work is unglorified and usually done behind the scenes, out of the limelight. And it's always, always underappreciated. Few pursuits better symbolize the metaphor of working "in the trenches" than the act of parenting.

During the past month, the community at-large was inundated with "Black History Month" moments. Even the more normal passions are stirred as the reality of persistent and unrepentant inequality and its long legacy in these United States is brought into sharp focus. Indeed, there is so much more to do in the African American's quest for a fair shake. So why don't we do it?

When I say "do it" I don't mean publically demanding, demonstrating, disrupting, posturing, accusing and baiting. I mean the grunt work of parenting. Doing the things necessary to raise a generation of children so emotionally prepared, so academically capable, so success-expectant, that their sheer brilliance cannot be denied.

What is the grunt work? It's homework supervision. It's partnering with teachers instead of expecting them to be the parents. It's overseeing and restricting television and video game time. It's knowing your children's closest friends—and their parent(s). It's establishing a work ethic by expecting regular performing of household chores. It's demanding that they read. It's taking them somewhere besides McDonalds, the movies or a video arcade.

Oh, and here's a novel concept. It's talking to them sometime. Not fussing at them, interrogating them, lecturing them, scolding them. But talking to them. Yes, a real discussion. A dialog.

Try doing some grunt work in the trenches of parenthood. It works. Better than anything else.

MON

Governor's tax reduction must not shortchange education

It seems as if each new session of the legislature brings some old themes re-wrapped in new words. Our current state legislative session has not disappointed us in this regard. Perhaps the best example of this phenomenon is the debate about the Governor's request that the property tax burden on the homeowners of Texas be reduced.

But first, here is a brief primer on taxes. Essentially, there are three types of taxes: income taxes, consumption taxes and wealth taxes. Income taxes are based on the profits of businesses and the personal income of individuals. Consumption taxes refers to the revenue gleaned from business activity (gross receipts) and the sale of goods and services. Texas currently ranks 7th in the nation in sales tax rate, although many products and services are still exempt in Texas, including food and most professional services. Wealth taxes are the main source of revenue for supporting local government and education. Nearly 50 percent of the state budget is devoted to education.

Financing much of the cost of the public schools in Texas is derived from the tax dollars of each homeowner, based on the assessed value of their property. In part, the Governor's rationale for property tax reduction is based on the belief that there needs to be a more equitable sharing of the burden for these

school expenses and that an alternative plan might be more advantageous. To this end, Governor Bush has proposed reducing property taxes, repealing the franchise tax and replacing it with a business activity tax. Business owners are very familiar with the franchise tax, which is assessed as a part of the process of registering and authorizing a company to do business in Texas.

While all the specifics of what the business activity tax will entail have yet to be specified, it is essentially a value added tax base on a business tax system used in Michigan. As is the case with most political debates, there are varying opinions as to the merits of each option. In fact, after the staff of the Governor's office identified these alternatives, he appointed a Citizens' Committee to hold public hearings around the state to determine if there was a consensus on how the property taxes could be reduced. After fourteen hearings and 72 hours of testimony, the committee came to the profound conclusion that there was no consensus for any tax proposal. As a result, the committee recommended keeping some property taxes in place to provide some local control and that a blend of taxes be used to supplement the reduction.

On January 28, during his State of the State address, Governor Bush pro-

posed reducing property taxes, repealing the franchise tax and replacing it with a business activity tax. During his speech he recommended the following provisions of what is now known as House Bill No. 4:

- Reduce school property tax rate by .20. Increase the homestead exemption to \$25,000 for school maintenance and operations tax.
- Eliminate the inventory tax paid to school districts
- Replace the franchise tax
- Replace the franchise tax with a business activity tax
- The state sales tax will be increased by .5 percent.

While much of this discussion may come across as a political shell game, the implications have real meaning for the business community and the lives of most Texans. There are those who argue that all of this effort is an attempt to use the much aligned "I" word in Texas, i.e., income tax. Whatever the case may be, the bottom line is that it is about money and, in this case, how public education in our state will be funded. And guess whose schools have the greatest interest in how we support our public schools?

MON



Viewpoint
Roy Douglas
Malonson

System of providing electricity works for the inner-city

lack large commercial and institutional users of electricity—clearly the most attractive targets for electricity re-sellers.

If under a regulated market, a utility's large commercial and institutional customers are lured away, the remaining customers would have to pick up the cost in the form of higher electric rates. That's not fair. And it should not be permitted. This cost shifting would occur because as large commercial customers depart from existing systems, a greater percentage of the utility's fixed costs will have to be absorbed by a smaller group of retail customers. Also, under these conditions, electric providers will not be able to sustain current levels of investment for personal, customer service, maintenance or system upgrades. This would result not only in higher rates for smaller customers, but a system whose reliability and stability has been compromised.

There are several other common sense reasons why it is inappropriate for lawmakers to consider retail competition in Texas' electric utility industry.

• Electric rates in Texas are already among the lowest in the nation. Our economy is strong, and that trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. There is no groundswell of public support to disrupt the current system.

• No state has implemented full retail competition, although several are studying the idea and have implemented pilot programs. It's no coincidence that these states, unlike Texas, have electric rates well above the national average.

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C I P V S

LETTERS...

Any journalist worth their....

I read with interest Cheryl Smith's article, "Any Black journalist worth their...will be there" (Pen on Fire, *Minority Opportunity News*, February 1997). As Ms. Smith implies, it is indeed hypocritical to criticize the efforts of an organization without putting forth personal effort to advance the goals of the group. However, after making at least four attempts via telephone over the last two weeks to get basic National Association of Black Journalist membership/registration information, and having none of my phone calls returned, I feel entitled to fire a salvo at the local organization.

Perhaps the local NABJ's perceived lack of strength or structure is a direct result of its perceived lack of professionalism. As a black journalist and public relations professional, I, not unlike members of the local NABJ, have great demands on my time fulfilling professional, social and family obligations. Even so, returning a phone call promptly (or not) speaks more about the credibility and overall professionalism of any individual or organization than any news article ever could.

Before I make my fifth phone call to NABJ, perhaps Ms. Smith should remember and take to heart the message in a popular television commercial from a few years ago: "You never get a second chance to make a first impression."

Darryl Ewing
Dallas

Ethnic Notes Kudos

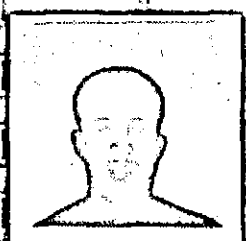
I'm writing to voice my appreciation for the entertainment retrospective series, "Ethnic Notes," written by Russell Shockley. The column is an informative, well-balanced look at the struggle for the equitable recognition and status of the African American's tremendous contribution to the movie/music industry.

For an Anglo like myself, the subject matter is not always "comfortable," but Mr. Shockley's unbiased, factually-supported chronicle reminds us all that only through the illuminating light of truth, even an uncomfortable truth, can we as a society recognize, and then strive, to eliminate the destructive forces of hate and injustice.

As a social studies teacher, I welcome the opportunity to openly discuss the roles that past custom, power and prejudice play in shaping current social attitudes, interaction and politics. Because "Ethnic Notes" takes an analytical (yet surprisingly entertaining) approach towards the history of African

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View Point Cont'd from page 2

Texas should not be the "test case" for the rest of the country.

•We have not fully implemented wholesale competition, which state legislators authorized in 1995. Wholesale competition—which should lower rates for all customers, not just a handful of big corporations—creates pricing competition among power suppliers, rather than at the retail end or end-user level.

Utility service and the growth it has generated have been key ingredients to achieving economic development in Texas. If we are to revitalize Texas' inner-cities, we must continue to have access to stable, affordable electricity. And we must be thoughtful and cautious when considering proposals to dramatically change the delivery system of a service as essential as electric power.

MON

Roy Douglas Malonson is chairman of the board of directors of the Acres Home Citizens Chamber of Commerce in Houston, Texas.

LETTERS...

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American entertainers, I always recommend Mr. Shockley's pieces to my students.

It is my hope that all my students will be able to develop the ability to objectively analyze the situations that confront them everyday; that they be able to separate truth from rhetoric and fact from assertively-stated opinion. Mr. Shockley's column helps me to help my students.

I look forward to his next column.

Billye D. Baird
L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary
Dallas, Texas

It is interesting reading in the Minority Opportunity News, especially the articles that are written by Russel Shockley. I believe this month's (MON Feb 1997) article is no exception. I find this article to be one of Mr. Shockley's best and I do support him 100 percent or better.

For his work, Mr. Shockley is just one of many blacks who deserve recognition for what he is doing. This magazine is very educational but the [February '97] article is especially educational because it deals with what has happened and what is now happening in black television.

And speaking of television, I believe Mr. Shockley should have a half hour or an hour television show. Some of today's shows and programs are not what they used to be and they get worse every year.

If there is one thing I know, it is that Russell Shockley is a great writer and he should be recognized for what he does.

P.S. I will be writing you again soon and often.

Keith A. Smith
Dallas

MON Kudos

I read your paper and was so very impressed with the content and informative articles and also how well-informed it addressed the communities.

I live in Sherman and would like to know how my husband's business and our church can receive copies of your paper. My husband has a small restaurant business and sells "Bar-Be-Que," homemade pies, cakes, potato salad, corn bread, beans, etc.

Please inform me of this opportunity. My church is Fellowship Baptist Church, P.O. Box 104, Sherman Texas, 75090.

Ruth Thompson
Sherman

More on Ebonics

I'm writing this letter in response to an article by Mr. Chris Pryer titled "Ebonics Shouldn't Signify Failure" in your January 1997 issue. Although you make the valid argument that we should not abandon our children's ability to master the English language, this issue is beyond the students and is wholly intended for the teachers of those particular kids. The apparent language barrier has always been an obstacle for African Americans in the broader society and now we are aiming at the same possible solution to eliminate that disadvantage that has disabled our people for over 400 years. The issue is not above any arguments, but needs to be explained completely to those of us who are in the dark about this vastly misunderstood subject and its objective. Keep up the good work, you do a wonderful job at MON.

Tony Keller
Dallas

Race matters

Race Matters, it is definitely painful, disturbing and unceasingly accurate.

My family and I have had first hand experience with what appears to be unequal justice being played out. My son, Desmond T. Bowie, 17, was tried and convicted of first degree murder and sentenced to 55 years in prison for accidentally killing another youth. There were other underlying circumstances; but the bottom line is that my son did not intentionally do this and nobody will listen to us.

The crime occurred when Desmond was 15 years old. He was immediately sent to Lew Sterritt Justice Center under a decrepanary transfer to be tried as an adult. The crime occurred after Desmond had been constantly victimized and tortured by two local gang members. The day of the crime, Desmond had been

beaten up and had his jewelry taken by the victim. With a gun purchased from a police officer who is still patrolling the community, Desmond went to retrieve his belongings with no intentions of shooting but only to bluff and scare the victim into leaving him alone. Desmond went when he felt parents were at home.

There was no consideration taken upon:

- The age of Desmond
- The torture he had suffered
- The regrets and suffering that Desmond suffered
- He had never been in trouble
- He was a victim
- Where the gun came from
- Improper arrest procedures
- Improper questioning
- Untrue confession written by a detective who has since resigned because of other bad confessions written
- Fast and speedy trail
- Accomplishments made by Desmond

Nine months passed by [and] Desmond still had never been interviewed by the Public Offender appointed to his case. After complaints, he was assigned to a court appointed attorney and investigator. As the saying goes, you get what you pay for. We could not afford representation that would cost us \$40,000 plus, and bond that was set at \$300,000. The attorney who was appointed to the case did not [adequately] represent my

son and in some respects misrepresented him. This attorney was just a figure in the courtroom. The jury was nine whites, one black and 2 other.

Desmond was sentenced with no parole for a minimum of 27 1/2 years from the date of 10/17/96. The trial took place in Dallas, Texas. Desmond testified during the trial that it was not his intention to shoot and kill. He could have taken 20 years offered by the D.A. Desmond doesn't know if the bullet came from his gun or where. Desmond is now up for an appeal. Does that mean that he will forever be lost in the legal system because he is black and poor? If the system wants so much rehabilitation how can this be? Being locked down for the rest of your life, is that the answer?

My observers confess that we are witnessing an obvious injustice. Race matters! Mr. Pryer, what do you think? Does Race matter? We need your help.

Clara L. Bowie
Dallas

Editor's Note: Interested parties are encouraged to write to Mr. Bowie.

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Thomas
Muhammad

Before beginning this column I wish to make a statement. I want all African Americans to please join me in shouting at the top of your lungs, in a very clear and loud voice, that no matter what that all white racist jury said, we believe that "O.J. IS NOT GUILTY!" Aaahh, now I feel vindicated, don't you? And hell, why can't we take O.J. back. White folks took Rev. Walker Railey back. And white Jews took that stupid "Shock Jock" Howard Sterns back after he dissed the late Tejano singer Selena, didn't they? So why can't we forgive O.J.?

And hell no, I didn't fall for the old shoe trick. After all, if you can doctor one photo and make it appear that a person is wearing a pair of shoes, then damn it, with today's technology you can do it to thirty pairs!

And one last thing before going to my column. Did you hear how all those white racist so-called experts explain why they believe O.J. was convicted in the civil trial versus the criminal one? Check this one out! These racist dogs are saying, "Well, the civil trial jury (majority white) really studied the information, they went over every piece of evidence 'very meticulously,' and they were 'real smart' judging by their 'read backs' they really knew what to ask for. Unlike the first jury, this one took their jury duty very seriously." In other words, the jury in the criminal trial (majority black) were just a bunch of "dumb n-word." Give me a break!

One man could not have committed these murders. And get this! Fred Goldman, the father of murder victim Ron Goldman, said during a press conference that his lawsuit against O.J. is not about money. That's got to be the lie of the century. Here is a man who ran off and left his family penniless and suddenly he's concerned about them! Yea, and my name is Tom Sausage Head!

If you ask me, white Jews seem to get nothing but money from everything they get involved in. Take for instance the latest issue happening in Switzerland where white Jewish groups have accused Switzerland of holding up to \$7 billion in gold they claim belongs to white Jews who died in the white Jewish Holocaust. Switzerland says that the real figure is a tiny fraction of that. So much pressure has been put on the Swiss government by the U.S. and other Western governments that even the Swiss ambassador to the

"Racism: Character Counts Dallas"

U.S. recently resigned his post. As of this writing, the Swiss government has ruled that it will put \$7 million in a trust fund to pay reparations to some white Jewish families who have suffered.

African and African American leaders should be questioning white Jews on where they got the gold in the first place. I can assure you that it came from the mines of South Africa. It's amazing how so many so-called Negro leaders keep

tap-dancing around holding white Jews accountable for their abuse of African people. These are the same type of dumb white men and women who have financed slavery, raped, murdered, slaughtered, lied

to, stole from and lynched Africans for centuries and they have the nerve to call someone else dumb. Damn these are some arrogant racists! Well what the hell, I think you get my point so, let's do the column, OK?

By now I'm sure you've seen those "black & white" billboards scattered throughout many parts of Dallas' poor inner-city neighborhoods displaying slogans exclaiming words like: Responsibility, Honesty, Citizenship, and boldly stating "Character Counts Dallas." Now under normal circumstances, individuals espousing these types of ideals would be lauded as noble people and would be commended for striving to make people aware of the importance of this subject. Even President Bill Clinton has gotten in on the act. During his state of the union

like Sandy Kress, Dallas County Judge Lee Jackson and former Dallas Mayor Steve "the racist" Bartlett. Anytime these three get together to counsel people on "character," believe you me, it's time to sound the alarm! Here's why.

Most of you know about Kress and his positions of supporting Dan Peavy in his racist attacks on African American children and school employees in the DISD. To my knowledge, Judge Lee Jackson has never done one damn thing to advance issues of concern or to show support for African Americans anywhere in their community, part of the city or the county. Jackson was a main character involved in the ouster of Rose Washington, the first African American female Juvenile Director in Dallas' history. And of course, many of us are very familiar with Bartlett's track record. Bartlett, while a City Planning Commission member, voted against Forest Avenue becoming Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. And he was consistent in his racism because once in Washington, D.C., after being elected to the U.S. Congress, he voted against naming a holiday to honor Dr. King. And as he floated back to Dallas on his \$1 million train to become mayor of Dallas, the mere two percent of the vote he received in the African American community proved we were not fooled by his smooth-talking high-profiled, well-paid Sambos as well. What Bartlett didn't know is that most of us knew these Negroes and also knew that they would sell their mothers for thirty pieces of silver and a ham sandwich. Judging by what we know about all the players mentioned above, character is the last thing that these nuts could teach anyone. This

"good character" promoting project is just another ploy created to promote white supremacists as the best character standards on which to judge all humans. Much like the racists who used a mis-translated bible verse to justify enslaving Africans centuries ago by saying that whites are a master race and that Africans were created to serve them. The "good character" pushers are using the same argument in a more subtle way by placing the messages on billboards in only predominantly African American areas of the city.

I'm always suspect anytime white folks, who are primarily the cause of most of our social problems, suddenly see fit to come into our communities to promote something and think we should too. These are the same racist white folks who have done everything they could to keep African Americans from having any independence and power to create and improve conditions in their communities. They've conspired with other white racist elected officials and business and community leaders to deny African Americans any influence in Dallas. Such a move is tantamount to massacring hundreds of people. Imagine for one moment what the Park Cities would look like if white Jews were denied resources to develop that area of the city? Think for a moment, what the zoo, the State Fair, Six Flags, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Dallas Symphony, DART and any other large development that you can think of would be without strong input from their respective leaders? Only former Deputy Mayor Pro-Tem Councilwoman Diane Ragsdale, School Board member Kathryn Gilliam and Commissioner John Wiley Price have been able to prove that if you show some backbone and stand up, you can get a number of things accomplished in spite of white racist dogs. Now that's real character!

Until then the struggle continues...

MON

pulse

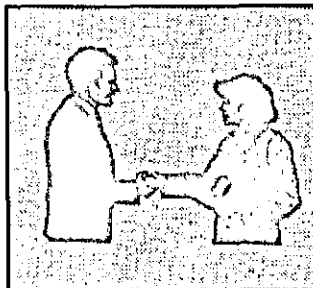
(Editor's Note: The opinions expressed by Mr. Muhammad's commentary are not necessarily those of the Minority Opportunity News.)

This "good character" promoting project is just another ploy created to promote white supremacists as the best character standards on which to judge all humans.

address the president said that he will push for "character classes" to be taught in schools. However, my cautious advice is that we need to be very careful, or to coin a phrase "beware of Greeks bearing gifts." Particularly here in Dallas, when those gifts come from the likes of racist

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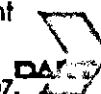
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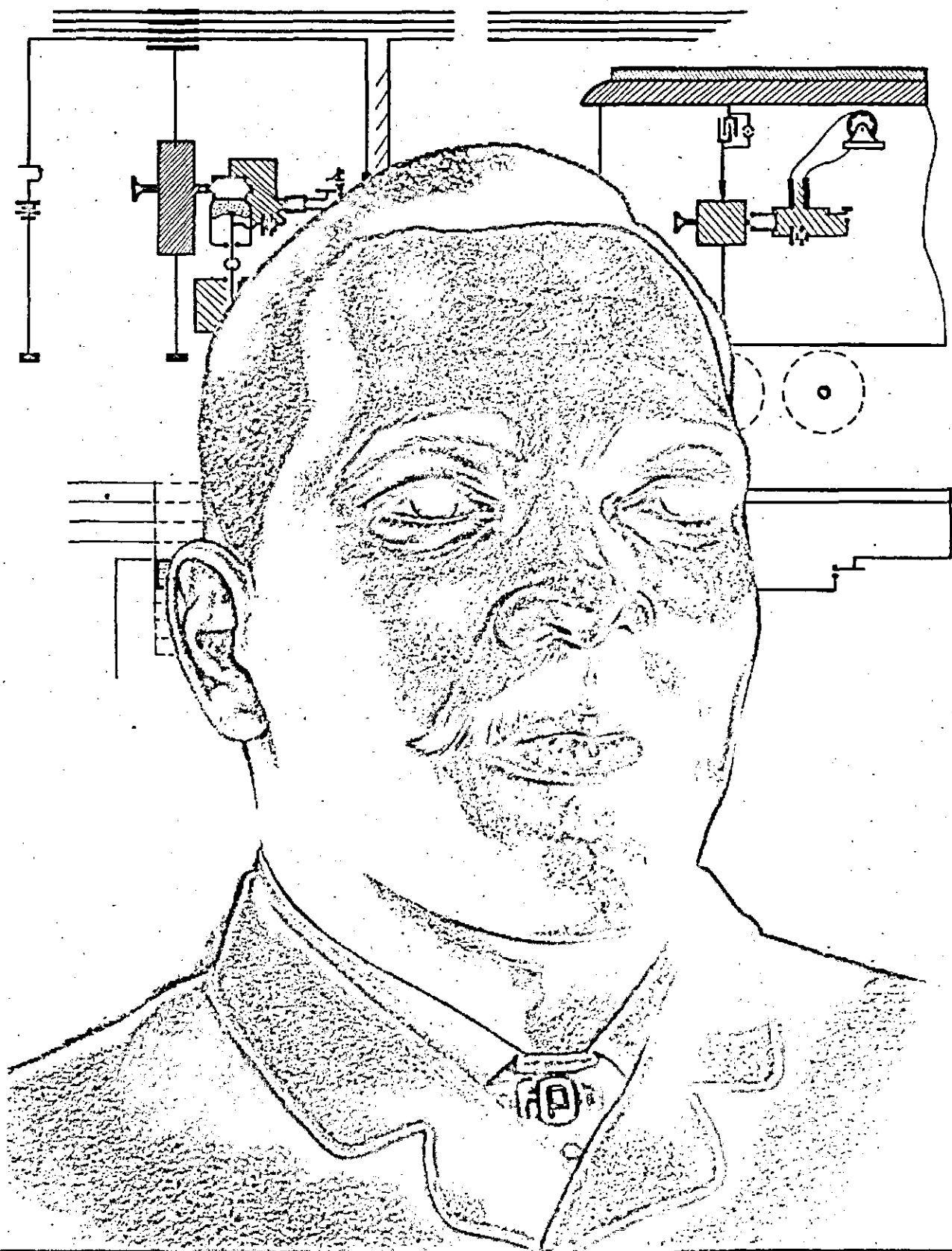
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Cheryl Smith

Jealousy keeps many from mentoring

The challenge for African Americans in television or any other place, for that matter, has to be how to co-exist, succeed, grow and flourish without tearing one another down in the process.

This challenge involves helping others along the way, instead of fighting one another for the few jobs that seem to be "allotted" for African Americans.

Noted author, poetess and educator Nikki Giovanni explained life best when she said, "Life is a process."

As we go through the process, it is imperative that we realize the bigger picture and not allow ourselves to become so over-consumed with our level of importance that we let the green-eyed monster destroy us.

When Dallas County Health and Human Services Director Betty Culbreath was recently named chair of the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport Board, she noted that, still, in 1997, you're hearing about the "first" for women, or the "first" for African Americans.

While there are people of good will all around the country applauding Ms. Culbreath's new post, there are also those who are disgruntled. And their voices are out there just as sure as you're reading this column.

Some have hinted that most of the opposition would come from other women. There seems to be something innate that makes one scorn another's success.

During a recent conversation with a friend, I listened intently as she described a scenario that, while not unique to television anchors, shows the dysfunction in our lives.

It seems the young friend recently accepted a weekend anchor position at a television station. She was so excited!

Until she went to work.

She knew there was only one other African American female anchor at the station and she immediately set out to become friends. After all, for years, all through college, laboring in the trenches and preparing for this day, my friend heard the drill over and over again:

"Build relationships, identify mentors and try to learn from those who are where you want to be. And also, remember to be a mentor for others."

So, imagine her surprise when she was rebuffed by the veteran journalist. She expected the woman to receive her with open arms, take her under her wing and show her the ropes. Not only was the

"older" anchor aloof and unresponsive, she was downright cold.

And if a rope was extended, there was a noose at the end!

In fact, when you think about it, the behavior sort of reminds you of the wife, girlfriend or mistress who sees her man with a younger woman. The frustration is really for the unfaithful man but rather than risk his wrath, the women turn on one another.

But with a job, these are entirely different circumstances. Instead of coveting a position and acting as though you are entitled to it for life, one must do the best they can while they can. If you continue to grow, dust won't settle under your feet. If you continue to contribute and build, you will usually reap the benefits.

Instead of turning your insecurities and false feelings of superiority on an unsuspecting "new kind on the block," confront the person who is really responsible for your discomfort.

But please make the problem legitimate and not a figment of a twisted, sordid, envious mind.

Instead of working to better conditions for

women in your profession or working to change those unwritten policies that discriminate against women as a whole, valuable time is spent backbiting and trying to foster a feeling of ill-will throughout the company for the "new kid on the block."

The irony of the situation is that many already know how the veteran is and they are carefully watching the scene as it progresses. They are just sitting back to see if the "veteran" is going to be true to form or surprise them and be a true lady, worthy of accolades.

They are waiting to see if the "neophyte" is going to come in, paying her dues and establishing a rapport; or is she going to come in trying to strut her "stuff" in the same old fashion of the understudy coming in to knock off the "old, washed out" has-been actress.

Clearly there has to be a better way.

According to some managers, the "battle" is fun to watch. For years, they (management) have been at the whim of the "prima donna" and now here's someone to come in and shake up the dust, make the veteran get off her high horse and do things she probably vowed she'd never do again because she had "paid her dues!"

And she has paid her dues. So wouldn't you think she'd be more than willing to reach out.

But oh, no!

Instead of building a relationship that could last a lot longer than those jobs, oftentimes you will find the two jockeying to show the people around them which is the better, nicer, sweeter African American woman.

The neophyte tries to show how better equipped she is for the main anchor position because of her youthfulness.

If the veteran was unruly and a pain in the rear, suddenly she becomes the sweetest person alive as she attempts to win the Miss Congeniality award.

Oh, what a tangled web we weave...

Well, it's time out for the backbiting, groveling, devious behavior that insiders

joke about. If you're in a position, and a scenario even remotely similar to the aforementioned one exists in your life, I can assure you that folks are laughing at you, not with you.

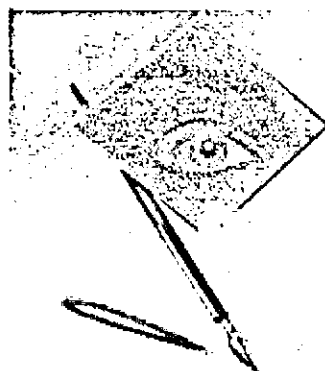
So, you need to make some decisions as you go through this process called life. Are you going to take yourself so seriously that eventually no one else will? Are you going to continue to let folk play you like a piano? Are you going to be a leader? Are you going to bring someone along with you? Are you going to lift as you climb or are you going to just get what's yours?

I would like to say the choice is yours. For that job, that is.

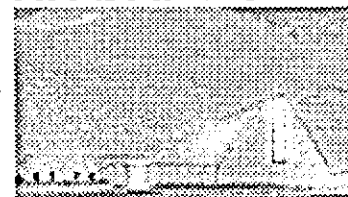
But that is not the way it is, and you need to recognize that!

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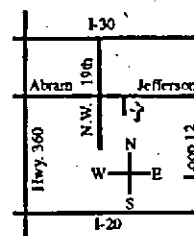
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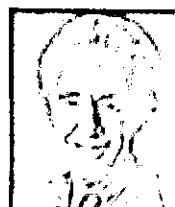
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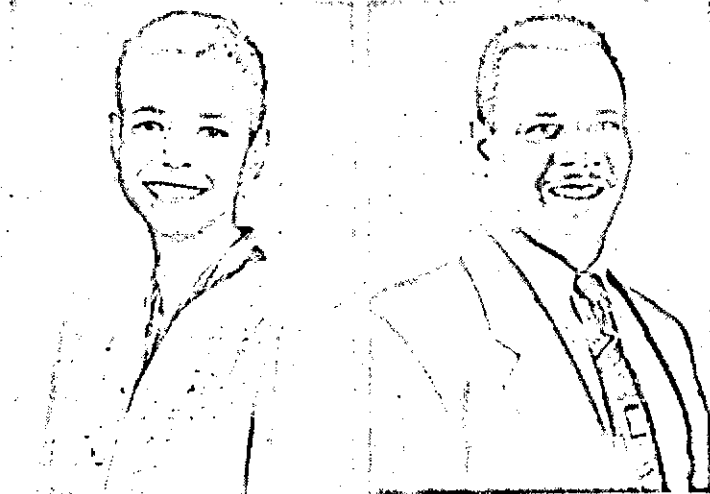
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TI employees honored as 1997 Black Engi- neers of the Year



Dixie Garr

Zephra C. Freeman

Two Texas Instruments employees have been named among this year's top 30 African Americans in science and technology by US Black Engineer and Information Technology magazine and the council of Engineering Deans of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Zephra Freeman and Dixie Garr received "1997 Black Engineers of the Year" awards in the "Small Business

Development" and "Professional Achievement Industry" categories, respectively. These TI employees, who work in Dallas and Plano, were the only two from the Dallas/Ft. Worth area on the annual list.

Ms. Garr, director of software development of TI's System Group, leads an organization of more than 800 engineers who are responsible for the development of software for TI's communication and defense business. She attributes her success to skills and attitudes she acquired while growing up. As a

national merit finalist, Garr earned a full scholarship to Grambling University where she graduated sum cum laude in three years with a double major in math and computer science. She did her graduate work at UCLA in computer engineering. Her current responsibilities include setting organizational directions and priorities, continuing to build a high performing team and leading develop-

ment of strategic plans that are conducive to long-term business success.

Mr. Freeman, new business development manager for TI's Digital Imaging Business, developed a program to assist small disadvantaged minority businesses in securing contracts with large corporations. He manages a team of engineers striving to achieve worldwide development of products and applications using TI's Digital Micromirror Device. The first in his family to graduate college, Freeman joined TI in 1984 after receiving his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Prairie View A&M University. Freeman, who also earned a masters of business administration degree in engineering while working full-time at TI, was promoted to engineering supervisor after only one year with the company.

Dr. James R. Farris honored by NAHSE

The National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE) honored Dr. James Randolph Farris last month for his contributions in public health service. Farris was recently appointed Regional Health Administrator for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

As a nationally recognized authority on sexually transmitted diseases, Farris is former medical director of the Dallas County Health Department's Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic. He is an advocate of educating the community about STD's in order to prevent or reduce occurrences.

The NAHSE, a nonprofit association of African American health care executives founded in 1968, promotes the advancement and development of African American health care leaders to elevate the quality of health care services to the poor and disadvantaged.

Along with the directorship of the STD Clinic, Farris served as Medical Consultant for the Dallas County Mental Health/Mental Retardation program. Most recently, he was the Medical Director of the Dallas County Health and Human Services Dept. and is currently an Assistant Attending in Internal Medicine at St. Paul Medical Center and Clinical Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine at UT Southwestern.

For more information contact Michele Raglon at (214) 786-8324 or (972) 293-7417.

Texas history retold in production of Camp Logan



Houston playwright, Celeste Walker

The Irving Black Arts Council is sponsoring the production of *Camp Logan*, 8:00 p.m., March 22 at the Irving Arts Center, Carpenter Performance Hall, 3333 N. MacArthur, Irving, Texas.

Camp Logan is a true account of the 1917 Houston, Texas riot that resulted in the largest court martial in military history. The play gives a visual depiction of many of the historical facts left out of American History books.

The play won the 1994 best play NAACP Image Award and has toured across the nation. The production received standing ovations at the Kennedy Center, Washington D.C. and has been favorably reviewed by the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Houston Post*.

The Irving Black Arts Council is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote, encourage and develop cultural activities within the city of Irving and the metroplex through African Americans and other minorities. For tickets call (972) 252-ARTS. For more information call (972) 993-8444.

Glover appointed Motel 6 vice president

Victor J. Glover Sr. was recently appointed vice president of safety and security at



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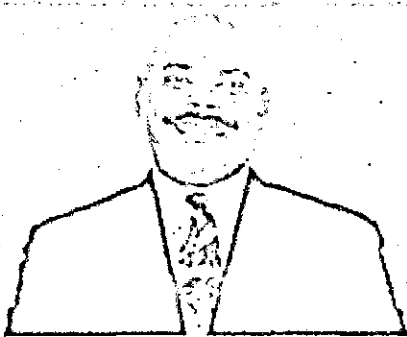
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More In The News . . .



Victor J. Glover

Motel 6.

Glover, who has 12 years of experience in retail/restaurant loss prevention and risk management, will head Motel 6's enhanced efforts in safety and security within its more than 750 properties.

He was formerly loss prevention manager for KFC-USA within a seven state geographic region on the West Coast. His responsibilities included protection of company assets, maintaining a safe environment for KFC associates and customers, and developing security programs for individual restaurants.

Glover is a member of the American Society for Industrial Security, the Retail Special Agents Association and the Fraternal Order of Police. For more information call Eric Studer at (972) 702-6958.

College students sought for summer internships

Representative Yvonne Davis is notifying constituents of District 1111 that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is actively recruiting college students, particularly women and minorities, for summer internship positions.

These positions are available statewide and provide job settings in which to gain practical experience and training in natural and cultural resource fields. Employment begins in May and ends in August. Applications will be accepted through March 31, 1997 for the program.

For more information, please contact Rep. Davis' district office at (214) 941-3895 or Dora Menchaca-Solis of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Human Resources Division at (512) 389-4541 or (512) 389-4485.

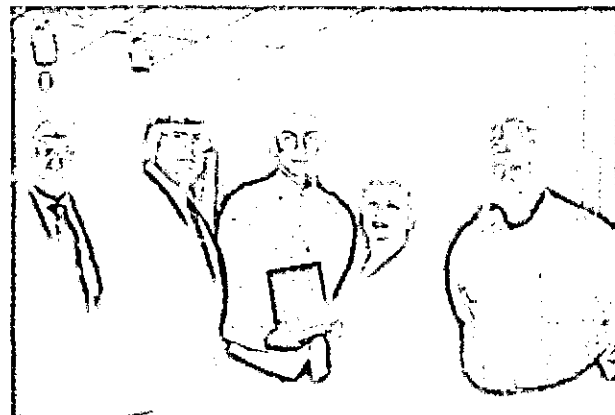
Lincoln high student wins VFW award

Ryan Williams, Jr., a senior at Lincoln High School in Dallas, was a winner

recently of the prestigious "Voice of Democracy Essay Contest" sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign War (VFW).

Ryan's accomplishment is significant not only for him but also for his sponsor, the Dorrie Miller VFW Post #1406 in Oak Cliff. This was the first time Post 1406 had ever entered the competition. Ryan placed fourth in the District 30 region which encompasses the state of Texas.

For more information call Allison Tucker at (214) 374-0694.



(l-r) Allison Tucker, N.F. "Red" Layne, Ryan Williams, Jr., Lanell Carr, J.L. Smith

UTA Ph.D. candidate wins Yale fellowship

Nadine Jarmon, a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Urban and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington, was recently notified by Yale University officials that she is one of only 20 students nationwide to be awarded a fellowship in the Community Renaissance program. Yale administers the program for the sponsor, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

The Community Renaissance program involves fellows in special two-year housing projects. To take the fellowship, Jarmon had to choose from 3 cities to work in. She chose Louisville, Kentucky.

Jarmon, 39, a single mother with a 9-year-old son, is a Conway, Arkansas native with a bachelor's degree in business and political science from the University of Texas at Austin. She also has a masters degree in public administration from the University of Texas at Austin. Since she has finished all her course work at UTA's School of Urban and Public Affairs and lacks only her dissertation, the move will not hinder her degree achievement.

For more information call Jarmon at (817) 265-5687 or SUPA at (817) 272-3363.

Dr. Larry "T-Byrd" Gordon releases new CD

Dr. Larry "T-Byrd" Gordon, his Band, and his eight year old son Larry "LL" Gordon II are taking the airways by storm with the release of *Solitaire Dreams*, a CD showcasing nine of the hottest artists and groups in the Sunbelt.



(l-r) Larry "T-Byrd" Gordon and Ricky Terry

The CD, which also contains gospel, pop, R&B, country and alternative rock selections, is available immediately for only \$12.98 if you order by March 31. After April 1, you can purchase the CD in Blockbuster Music stores for \$16.23.

Dr. Gordon is one of the most accomplished and multi-talented musicians on the contemporary music scene. His versatile music style encompasses all types of music. Gordon, a master musician who plays 27 instruments, accepts bookings for all types of events.

To order the CD call (214) 712-9216 in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area or 1-800-484-9478 outside of Dallas/Ft. Worth or out-of-state. For bookings contact Dr. Gordon at (972) 286-6832 or (972) 285-4391. For more information on Dr. Gordon and his band and the new CD call Henry Nelson at (214) 965-4494 days, or (214) 763-6634 evenings.

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Charter Schools: Could they be a solution for our educational woes?

By Gina Weldon

Contributing Writer

Throughout the country, a new educational movement has grown, supposedly out of the increasing need and demand for better public education. The advent of charter schools, which began in 1991 in Minnesota, has now reached the Metroplex. As of August, 1995, over 250 charter schools had been approved in ten states with most of the schools being located in Arizona, California, and Colorado. In the school reform law passed in Texas in 1995, the Texas Legislature authorized a maximum of 20 independent charter schools, where the schools would be free of most state regulations in order to set up specialized learning programs. Last year, there were four applications from the Dallas area, The Genesis Charter High School, the Dallas Can! Academy Charter School, the North Hills School, and the Helen Hardrick Christian School. The Renaissance School of Irving was the first school in this area to win approval from the State Board of Education.

Charter schools are public schools that are approved by the state but are free from many of the regulations that govern regular public school districts. They are schools developed and managed by parents, community groups, or nonprofit organizations. The schools can serve any type of student it wishes, and have whatever focus it desires, as long as it meets a few requirements of the state. The school can be run with a small number of staff where maximum attention can be given to teaching. Charter schools started by parents or groups must be open-enrollment schools, where all who apply must be accepted. There are no district boundaries, therefore, students are eligible from throughout the area served by the school.

The arguments for the rise of charter schools are many. It has been said that charter schools will allow more options for parents, who can increase their involvement, and thus, their satisfaction. Charter schools, since they are specially designed, appear to be better able to meet the needs of students. In addition, it is argued that competition will convince traditional public schools to improve, and that freedom from state regulation will generate innovation. A study by the Center for School Change reports that one of the driving forces behind the creation of charters is the opportunity to provide "better teaching and learning for all kids." The hope is that with the flexibility and freedom given to charter schools, teachers, parents, and commu-

nities can establish schools that more directly address the special needs of their children.

In Texas, one of the greatest barriers to the charter school movement has been money to begin the schools. Although the U.S. Department of Education gave \$18 million in 1995 to help charter schools that catered to at-risk students, Texas only got \$250,000. Charter schools do not receive funds from local school districts and are not allowed to collect taxes or issue bonds to collect money. They must solicit funds from businesses, foundations, and other organizations in order to begin operation. Some charter schools are trying to avoid start-up problems by



Louisa Piette

developing campus charters instead of open-enrollment charters. In that instance, the schools usually convert an existing school building for the charter purpose.

Here in Dallas, where the educational system appears to be on the firing line daily, the advent of charter schools will affect this area tremendously. As lobbying is now taking place to raise the cap on the number of allowable charters in Texas, Dallas may see more and more charter applications being submitted for the Metroplex. The North Hills School in Irving will open its doors in August 1997, and is beginning with a program which is unique to the Dallas area and to most of Texas. It will offer a rigorous academic program developed by the International Baccalaureate Organization that is taught by only 200 high schools in the U.S. and only 500 high schools throughout the world. North Hills' program, however, will serve middle school students to prepare them for the IB high school program.

The North Hills School, though created primarily to serve the students of north Irving and Las Colinas, is an open-enrollment charter school, and thus can receive students from any school district. It has begun taking applications for its

216 slots and has received some from the Dallas area. Luisa Piette, the Diversity Chairperson, has begun a publicity campaign to inform the minority communities of Dallas-Ft. Worth and the mid-cities about the opportunities available at the North Hills School. Piette states that "we are trying to get as many minority groups as possible interested in the school. We developed this campaign so that students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go to private schools will have the ability to get an excellent education. The International Baccalaureate curriculum and the entire charter process is very exciting." Piette further states that while North Hills wants to englobe all people as a part of the program, the largest "minority" that has applied so far in any number is the Japanese.

Catherine Dikes, Chief Educational Officer for the North Hills School, states unequivocally that, "We want a diverse population here. Part of the curriculum is a study of various cultures and appreciation of each other as a part of mankind. We must learn to appreciate the differences we all have in our cultures and backgrounds." Dikes, a former school administrator with the Fort Worth ISD, states that the International Baccalaureate-based curriculum is the primary point of appeal for parents and students who might be interested in the North Hills School. "This will be an educational environment that is unique, challenging, and brings together students who would otherwise be divided by district boundaries," said Dykes. In addition, Dikes points out, the school is developing partnerships with North Lake College and other local corporations to provide special resources for the students.

"Because our funding is limited, we have to enter into these partnerships in order to provide certain important items for the children. At Northlake College, for instance, we will have access to their gymnasium, swimming pool, athletic fields, and library for appropriate grade-level use. We have also approached the Challenge Foundation and Caltex Industries to see if we can develop partnerships with them as well."

Opposition to the charter school movement in the African American community has basically come from two positions. The first position, having a historical perspective, sees the charter school movement as a link in the continuing chain of Anglo flight from the urban school districts since the integration of schools. That position contends that firstly, a number of private schools were set up, but they failed because the majority of Anglo parents could not afford the cost. Anglo flight to the suburbs was diffused when African Americans moved to the suburbs. Then "school-centered education" was created, which shifted

North Hills School Enrollment Procedure

Applications for admission to the North Hills School are still being accepted. However, with only 216 slots and a first-come, first-served admissions policy, time is of the essence if you wish to apply for your child's admission. Parents may contact Catherine Dikes, Chief Educational Officer of the North Hills School at (972) 550-7979, extension 3153, to request an application. Ms. Dikes is also available to speak to groups interested in the school. On April 5th, North Hills will have a fundraiser/introduction event at the Studios of Las Colinas from 2pm to 5pm. Children can tour the studio and parents will be able to speak with school founders and staff.

The North Hills School will offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program to students from the 5th to the 8th grade. It plans to add a grade per year after the first year in order to offer continuity into the International Baccalaureate high school program. The IB program, beyond intellectual rigor and high academic standards, places emphasis on the ideals of international understanding and community service. The curriculum covers eight subject areas and includes strategies that increase the student's awareness of the relationships between the subjects.

This month the school will hold pre-admission conferences with interested parents and students to meet the applicants and make sure any unanswered questions are addressed.

GW

responsibility for local schools to the parents. Now, it is contended, the charter school movement was created to allow Anglo parents to set up their own public schools where they can regain full control. The second opposing position only opposes charter schools because it says the movement does not offer a true option for African American parental groups or organizations. The theory is that if African Americans decided to create their own charter schools, they would be solely dependent on the meager state funds allocated. As charter schools have to network with organizations and corporations for the funds and resources that are generally available in the regular public schools, the access to the expansive type of networking that would be needed are generally not available to African American parent groups as a whole.

Joan Kilanowski, one of the found-

ing committee members of the North Hills School, readily states that the North Hills School was initially designed for the North Irving and Las Colinas communities. "As Irving developed, the area was divided into three school districts and though you might live only five miles from Irving High School or six miles from Coppell High School, your child couldn't go to those schools. You had to put your child on a bus and go 45 minutes into a community where the kids didn't have any ties. Their worlds were divided. In addition, as corporations began moving into Las Colinas, their employees were finding that the schools did not always offer to their children the type of curriculum they desired. After a few surveys, we began developing the ideal situation based on what we heard the people wanted—a community-based school, where local corporations' employees' children would also have an opportunity to attend." Dikes, however, is quick to point out that one of the great things about a charter school is that it has no district boundaries, so it can receive students from any area of the city who wish to attend. "We will draw a certain type of student who will be interested in what we have to offer. We want ultimate success for the child in educational endeavors. So what we offer in the International Baccalaureate program may interest some and not others, even within this local community."

Piette says she feels strongly about encouraging children from minority groups to come forth. "Parents need to get to know the program and the school...it is very unique and is something that's being promoted nationally. The school will give a child a varied background that will enable him or her to be very adept as he or she goes on to become an adult in this society."

In Dallas, Dr. Ora Lee Watson, Operations Executive for Magnet Schools Curriculum at Dallas Public Schools, thinks that charter schools are a negative for public education because they siphon off public funds and ultimately are merely a response to a question of power.

"I understand the desires of parents who want the best education for their children. My response is that the public school system has to get its act together and not turn a blind eye to the desires of parents and the needs of students. Parents have a right to expect exemplary behavior from administrators and board members, but many times, in public systems, the parents don't want us to impose the rules that would be imposed in a private system." Watson continues by saying that the Dallas Public Schools has programs that meet the "educational options" criteria that is advanced by those in favor of charter schools. "We have programs to meet the needs of special students and have developed excep-

tional curriculum designed to meet the growing needs for students who need to be prepared for the 21st century." In fact, Dallas Public Schools has magnet high schools, academies, vanguard schools, and learning centers, all of which have developed curriculum plans to increase academic achievement and expand the horizons of the students. Watson believes that one exception to her view on charter schools is the Dallas Can! Academy. She states, "They take kids who no longer fit in the regular public setting....teens who have to work, who have children, or for whatever reason, no longer feel comfortable with their age peers, but are still eligible for public funds." Dallas Public Schools also has programs for those teens, namely in the form of the Comprehensive Evening School, the Middle College and the Metropolitan Alternative Learning School.

So the question remains, "Are charter schools the solution for our educational problems and issues in the Metroplex?" Dikes of North Hills hopes charter schools will spur innovativeness and creativeness in education. "I don't think that one school or one district has all the answers," she says. "Hopefully, we'll just be a little part of the solution for a big puzzle that has lots of parts." Kilanowski agrees and states that she hopes that business leaders will support these new educational efforts for a better 21st century. Her final comments sum up what is probably the best advice for those considering charter schools or any school: "I would encourage parents to take the time to look at the school before they make a decision for their children. See who the teachers are and what the curriculum is. Get a sense of the school and the people involved before you put your child in."

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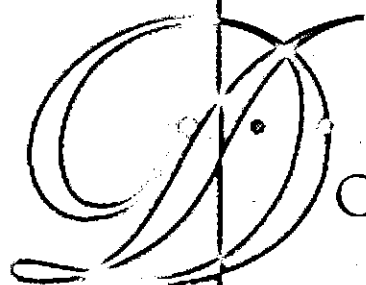
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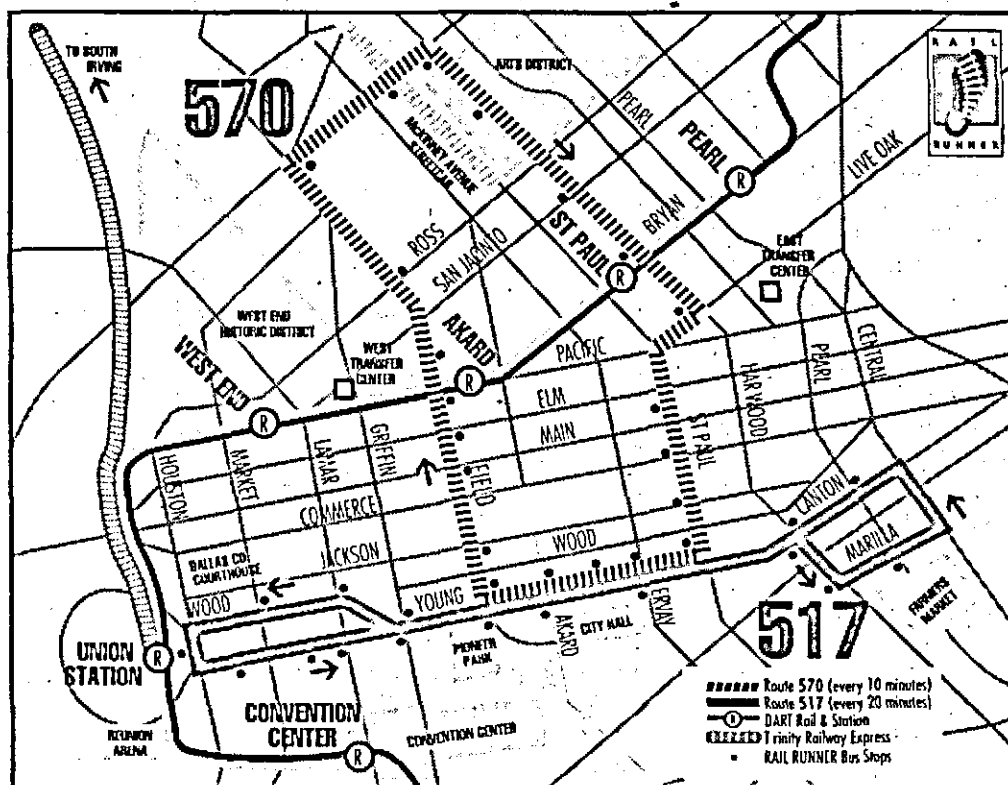
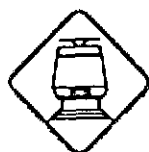
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Blacks in television

The South's television stations struggle to keep the medium segregated (Part 3)

By Russell Shockley, B.S.Ed.

Television was still in its infancy at the end of 1949, and most of it was produced and seen in the midwest and northeast. There were only thirteen southern television markets by December 1949. While that represented 22.4 percent of all cities having television programming access, only 4.5 percent of television sets were in the South. As the industry entered the 1950s, the growth of television in the South had been stunted. And given the freeze on licensing new stations by the Federal Communications Commission, not until 1953 was the South able to address this imbalance. Until that date, there were no operative television transmitters in Mississippi, Arkansas or South Carolina.

It would not be incorrect to argue that when the South, with its overt anti-black social patterns, was integrated into the national television audience, the hopes of those seeking an equitable future for Afro-Americans in the medium were crushed. Had it not been for the cultural attitudes of people from the South, one could have expected racial equity in television before the mid-1950s.

Network executives, station owners, advertising agencies and sponsors were sensitive about their programming. As was the case in the heyday of network radio, no one concerned with television broadcasting wanted to offend large segments of the audience by being linked with politically volatile causes. And because of the politics of the time, achieving social justice for minorities—which a few years earlier had been a legitimate liberal political goal—was a controversial, even unpatriotic, posture by the mid-1950s.

The modern civil rights movement was nurtured in the postwar 1940s. It did not grow into a powerful national concern, however, until the United States Supreme Court decided in May 1954 that the notion of "separate but equal" was inherently wrong. Following that decision, the civil rights movement became increasingly visible and confrontational. Beginning with school segregation, agitators soon were demanding an end to all forms of American racism. And as often as Jim Crow laws were challenged by racial reformers, hostile whites organized to defy those demanding change.

The simultaneous emergence of the civil rights movement and television was fortuitous for those advocating reform in

race relations. While radio verbalized matters such as the U. S. Supreme Court decision regarding segregation in 1954 and the black boycott of city buses in Montgomery in 1955 and 1956, television's mixture of pictures and sound was considerably more impressive.

But there were numerous instances of traditionalists attempting to thwart the revolutionary influence of video. Many southern stations refused to accept syndicated and network movies because they felt such films would upset local social standards. Motion pictures such as *Go, Man, Go*, the story of the Harlem Globetrotters, and *The Jackie Robinson Story*, a biography of the first black man to play major league baseball, were accepted only hesitantly by many stations. The all-black musical, *Cabin in the Sky*—a 1943 MGM film starring Lena Horne, Ethel Waters and Eddie Anderson and directed by Vincente Minnelli—was rejected in many southern markets when it aired in 1957. Fearing a hostile reaction from its thirty southern affiliates, ABC refused to air *The Defiant Ones*, a thinly-veiled morality tale about the need for cooperation between whites and blacks (starring Tony Curtis and Sidney Poitier) sched-

words of one legislator, "the making of such films will be pleasing to the Communists and other un-American organizations and, to all intents and purposes, will amount to another tactic in their campaign to brainwash the American public into acceptance of race mongrelization."

Regional resistance to the images and messages communicated by national television ranged from preemption of controversial programs to organizing for regional autonomy.

Another example of sectional resistance was found in the incipient rebellion developing in the early 1960s among southern broadcasters within the National Association of Broadcasters. Feeling that too much network programming was unfriendly to the South, for several years southern stations threatened to bolt the national trade association and form their own regional group. Speaking to a summer meeting of the South Carolina Broadcasters Association in 1961, Walter J. Brown, of WSPA-TV in Spartanburg, S.C., called for creation of a regional association to combat network news and programs "which are slated against the South. Our way of life is under attack."

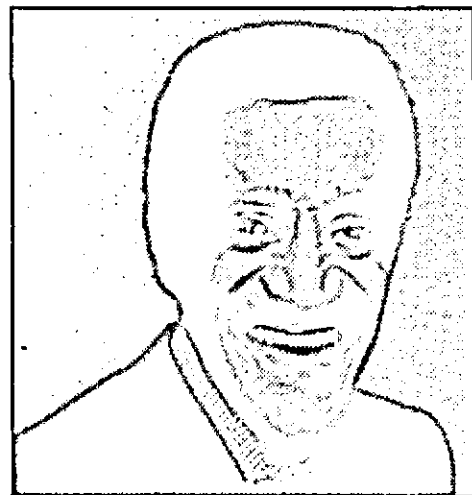
By the early 1960s, there was no doubt that television was challenging southern traditions. More powerfully than literature, more effectively than radio, television communicated a single, nationally acceptable message with regard to the civil rights issue. No

the acrimony surrounding the cancellation, and the regional national sensibilities being antagonized by the emergent civil rights movement, it would not be until the middle of the next decade that significant programming featuring black stars would occur.

With several notable exceptions, Afro-Americans continued to appear on



Bill Cosby was the first black actor to star in a prime-time television series. He won three Emmy Awards for his role in *I Spy*, which aired from 1965 to 1968.



Sammy Davis Jr., left, was a featured performer in *Zane Grey Theater* (1959), *Lawman* (1962) and *The Rifleman* and *Frontier Circus* (1962). Dorothy Dandridge appeared in *Cain's 100* (1962).



uled for the 1962-1963 season.

Even before they became available to television, several movies encountered problems in the South. As reported in *Variety* magazine, Dallas police, in 1958, banned Brigitte Bardot's film, *And God Created Woman*, from black theaters. The police explained that the French film was "too exciting for colored folk." One year earlier, the Alabama House of Representatives unanimously resolved to ask Alabama theater operators not to exhibit *Island in the Sun*, featuring Harry Belafonte and Joan Fontaine, because, in the

amount of rhetoric or obscurity could dull the meaning on the evening news, or in special documentary programming, of white policemen clubbing praying black demonstrators. And no amount of qualification or compromise could thwart ambitious blacks who saw "the good life" on their favorite television shows and in the many materialistic commercials shown by the medium.

That network television was inhospitable to substantial black involvement was evident in the collapse of the *Nat King Cole Show* in December 1957. Given

television as infrequent guest stars on variety shows, or as occasional stars in filmed or live dramas, always cast in traditional roles.

American television in the late 1950s and early 1960s was dominated by westerns. They came in all shapes and formats, with dozens of gimmicks to set them apart. There were ex-Confederates (*The Rebel*) and ex-Yankees (*The Loner*) as heroes; there were gamblers (*Maverick*) and newspapermen (*Jefferson Drum*); lawyers (*Black Saddle*) and even a bounty hunter (*Wanted: Dead or Alive*). There were sheriffs, marshals and detectives. The westerns also featured as heroes a mercenary (*Have Gun, Will Travel*); a rancher (*The Rifleman*); a gun salesman (*Colt .45*); a former gunfighter (*Johnny Ringo*); a woman sharpshooter (*Annie Oakley*); and twin brothers (*Two Faces West*). There was a predominance of white champions, with the only diversity represented by a Chicano (*The Cisco Kid*) and an Apache with a Harvard law degree (*Law of the Plainsman*).

However, no central character was Afro-American. In fact, black actors were virtually absent from the Western genre. Although blacks played a crucial part in the history of the actual West, only rarely did they appear in the television west cre-

ated in Hollywood. Sammy Davis Jr. was a featured star in several dramas, including *Zane Grey Theater* (1959), *Lawman* (1961), and *The Rifleman and Frontier Circus* (1962). Rex Ingram appeared in one episode of *Black Saddle* in 1959, and Frank Silvera was featured in a single episode of *Johnny Ringo* in 1960. Considering that the genre dominated television for several years, and that in the fall of 1959 there were twenty-nine different western series aired weekly on network television, black representation was miniscule.

Detective series were also popular in the early 1960s. Set as they usually were in modern urban surroundings, one might have expected substantial utilization of Afro-American actors. While blacks did appear more often in detective dramas than in westerns, this did not signify a breakthrough for black talent. Instead, black actors such as James Edwards (*Peter Gunn*, 1960); Diahann Carroll (*Peter Gunn*, 1960 and *Naked City*, 1962); Juano Hernandez and Cicely Tyson; Rex Ingram (*The Law and Mr. Jones*, 1963); and Dorothy Dandridge (*Cain's 100*, 1962) appeared only occasionally as

While blacks did appear more often in detective dramas than in Westerns, this did not signify a breakthrough for black talent.

local-color characters, or in supporting roles in individual episodes. The only detective series to employ blacks in recurring roles was the comedic program *Car 54, Where Are You?*, which between 1961 and 1963 featured Nipsey Russell and Frederick O'Neal as humorous policemen.

I Spy was the first network dramatic series to star a black actor. Not since the demise of *Harlem Detective*, in 1954, had television attempted to feature a black detective hero. And *Harlem Detective*, of course, was a local show in New York City, not a network production. *I Spy* was seen, however, on 180 stations covering 96 percent of the country.

Casting Bill Cosby as Alexander Scott, a black tennis trainer and traveling companion to fellow agent Kelly Robinson (played by co-star Robert Culp) broke the color line like no other series in television history.

During the three-year run of *I Spy* (1965-1968), Bill Cosby won three Emmy Awards as the most outstanding actor in a continuing dramatic role. Cosby was one of the most popular stars in video—ranking first with children twelve to seventeen years old, third with those eigh-

teen to thirty-four years of age and tying eighth with the total audience.

I Spy became an important program for other black actors. Many Afro-American performers played dramatic roles in the series, including Eartha Kitt, Barbara McNair, Greg Morris, Nancy Wilson and

many others. These guest stars often appeared in nontraditional parts. Diana Sands, for example, portrayed an Israeli agronomist. Ivan Dixon and Cicely Tyson played African royalty caught up in the propaganda war between East and West. And Leslie Uggams portrayed a woman

who was a participant in a Communist conspiracy in Italy.

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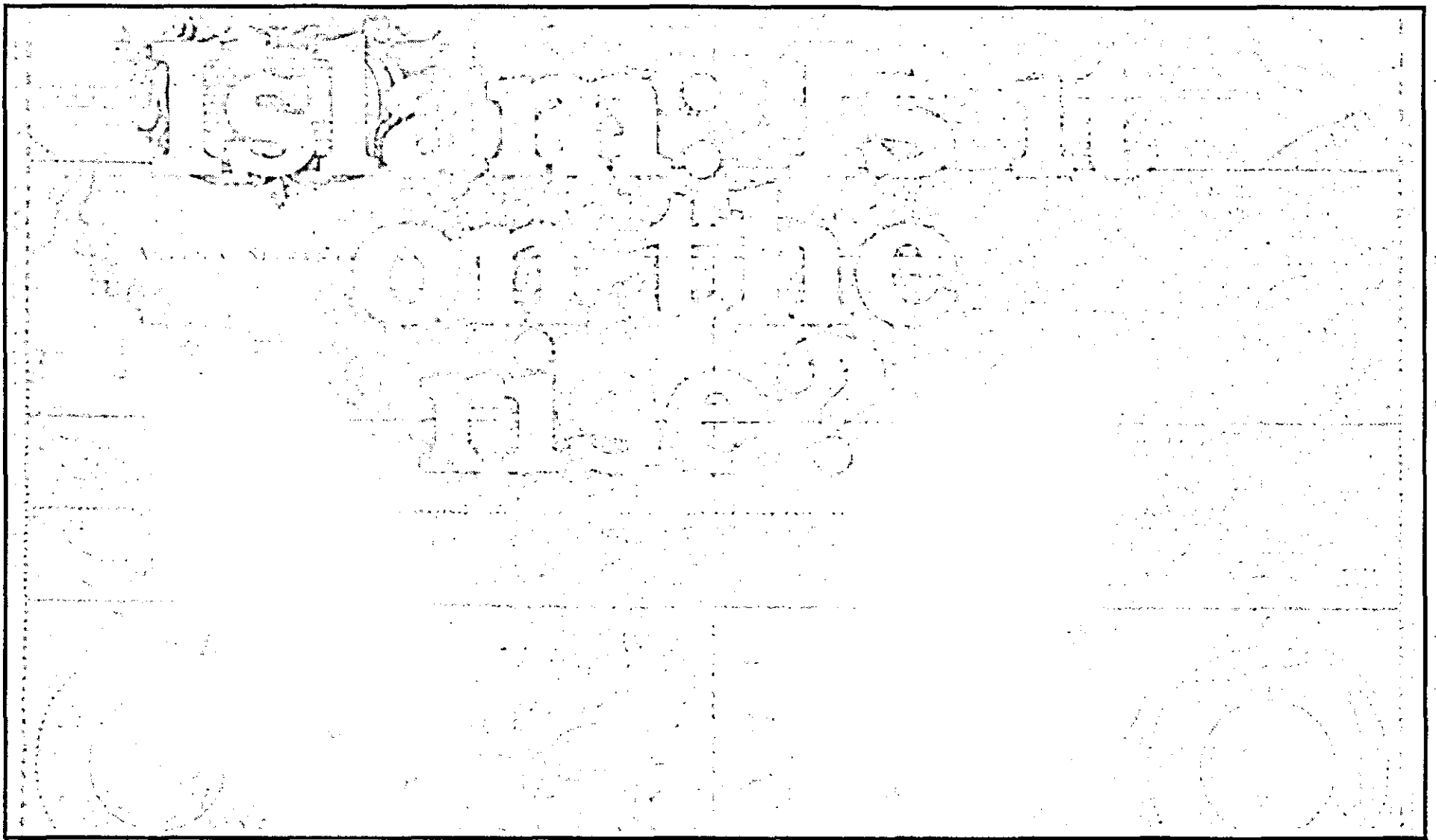
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By Thomas Muhammad

According to the *Christian Science Monitor* and many other prominent non-Islamic publications reporting on world religions, the fastest growing world religion in the world today is Islam. For years religious scholars have been baffled by the question of how the Islamic faith can be the most misunderstood and, at the same time, the world's fastest growing religion. The religion of Islam is practiced by over 1 billion people. The reasons for this are many and varied. Primary among them is Islam's long confrontation with Christianity.

When Islam arose in the seventh century C.E. (A.D.), it spread across whole continents with shocking speed. Its political power eventually eclipsed that of the Roman Empire—one of the greatest social and military powers the world has ever known. The convincing logic of Islam's theological claim, the ennobling upliftment of its pietism and morality, the pragmatic efficiency of its law, the appeal of its universality, and the moving commitment and liberality of its adherents—all these disarmed the millions and persuaded its world power, affluence, high civilization and culture. For a thousand years it was the only challenger to Europe's default religion of Christianity and came close to making a conquest of that continent. Europe, in turn, sent a dozen crusades against Islam in the countries where it dominated, to no avail. However, a campaign launched by Christendom in Spain succeeded and brought to an end seven centuries of Islamic domination in the Iberian Peninsula. But it was only in the last two centuries that Europe succeeded in conquering the Muslim World and subjecting it to colonial fragmentation and rule. Even so, the religion of Islam continued

to spread in Asia and Africa at a greater pace than did Christianity, despite the support Christian missionaries received from the colonial powers.

This long history of confrontation and conflict gave rise to countless rumors and fabrications designed to place Islam and its adherents in a bad light. Along with a misunderstanding of the Islamic religion and culture, the antagonistic allegations became built-in and persistent prejudices. Therefore, persons studying Islam need to take special care to approach the subject with an open and sympathetic mind. Genuine understanding of Islam will reveal to studious individuals that Islam is a later movement of that very consciousness which produced Judaism and Christianity and that Islam is just as much a source of Western civilization as classic Greece and Rome.

What is Islam?

The word Islam is commonly translated as "peace." Anyone who professes a willingness to practice this peace is called a *Muslim*, meaning one who peacefully submits his whole will to the will of "Allah" (God). The number of Muslims in the world today is a subject of controversy. Unfortunately, the controversy cannot be solved at present. In some countries, a census has not been taken for many years. Some governments are interested in belittling or exaggerating the number of their Muslim citizens. In still other countries, such as the U.S.S.R. and China, no census may distinguish the Muslims from their non-Muslim compatriots i.e., Bosnia, Croatia, Afghanistan, etc. Hence no account of the total number of Muslims is absolutely trustworthy. The United Nations Statistical Yearbook relies on the figures supplied by governments. Its figures are subject to the "official" viewpoint taken by governments—be they Muslim, non-Muslim, secular, or anti-religious—and therefore are subject to be underestimated or overestimated. According to the U.N., the world Muslim population is 538 million; according to Muslim governments and non-Muslim

religious scholars, it's over 1 billion. Even if we take the lesser figure, Muslims constitute a significant portion of the world's population of four billion. At least one out of every seven people in the world is

a Muslim and they constitute the majorities of many countries and significant minorities in other countries.

The map of the Muslim world looks like a solid rectangle running over the great land mass of Africa and Asia. It stretches from Dakar, the westernmost corner of Africa, all the way to Sinkiang in northwest China. The rectangle seems to have three long fingers: one stretching over the east coast of Africa, a second along the great river plains of northern India and reaching to the Bay of Bengal, and a third stretching over the entire archipelago of the East Indies and including the Philippines, New Guinea, and Java. By continents, Muslims are divided as follows: 8,370,000 live in Europe; 430,267,000 in Asia, including the Middle East; and about 90,000,000 in Africa. There are no accurate figures for Muslims in North America. About half of North American Muslims are African American and are orthodox. Muslims have great diversity in appearance. They are divided into many cultural groups, each carrying its own dress, customs and ways of life. In the past, the Muslim world has witnessed a great deal of mobility among its people. The brotherhood, racial tolerance, and lack of color discrimination—common institutions of the Muslims—once made it possible for anyone to move from one end of the empire to another without estrangement. As a direct effect of this mobility, Muslim urban populations are very mixed. This is more than evident to anyone sitting at a sidewalk cafe in Rabat, Tripoli, Cairo, Damascus, Jiddah, Baghdad, Teheran, Lahore, Delhi or Jakarta. Passing by are automobiles as well as camels; veiled women as well as women in saris and miniskirts, jeans and sarongs; fair and blue-eyed northerners as well as blacks, West African Hamites, Chinese or Mongols; small-built Malays or large-bodied Afghans; men with parted hair and men with fezzes and turbans; men in western clothing and men in flowing robes. All of them are Muslims.

It is a misnomer to call Muslims "Mohammedans," as some Christian writers are wont to do. Muslims, unlike Christians (who take Jesus' designation of being the "Christ" as the name of their faith), do not worship Muhammad as some Christians worship Jesus. Rather, Muslims worship God alone and believe that Muhammad is only a prophet who was sent to convey the true teachings of God to humanity just as Jesus, Moses, Abraham and other prophets before him. Muslims also believe that prophet Muhammad is the last and final prophet that was sent by God and that the Holy Qu'ran (Koran) is the last and final Holy book and that no other prophets or books will come.

Like many Christians, Muslims believe that people must believe in God and show faith by practicing righteousness. Those who do will receive a great reward in heaven. And much like Christians, Muslims believe in God's angels and God's books, which are revealed through His prophets. And Muslims believe that all will be punished for their sins. In fact it was a Christian King in Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) who protected the early Muslims when the Muslims fled Mecca because of religious

persecution suffered there.

The Origins of Islam

"One day, while Muhammad was asleep in the cave, an angel approached with a sheet in his hand. The angel said to Muhammad, "Read!" Muhammad answered in surprise, "What shall I read?" He felt as if the angel had strangled and then released him. Once more he heard the command, "Read!" Again, Muhammad's reply was, "What shall I read?" Once more he felt the angel strangling and then releasing him, and he heard him repeat the command, "Read!" For the third time Muhammad answered, "What shall I read?" fearful that this time the strangling would be stronger. The angel replied, "Read in the name of your Lord, the Creator, who created man of a clot of blood. Read! Your Lord is most gracious. It is He who taught man by the pen that which he does not know." Muhammad recited these verses, repeating them after the angel who withdrew after they were permanently carved upon his memory.

Thus began the prophethood of Muhammad. The year was 610 C.E. (A.D.) and these were the first of many verses that would be revealed to Muhammad for over a 23 year period. These verses and many others comprised what finally became the Holy Qu'ran (Koran).

The Qu'ran is read daily by millions of believing Muslims. It is also the only holy book in the world that students are taught to memorize in its entirety. Individuals who can recite the entire Qu'ran from cover to cover by memory are called "hafiz" or protectors. The "cave" where Muhammad encountered the angel is located on Mt Arafat, a mountain in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the city where prophet Muhammad was born. This site is visited by millions of Muslims, who make the pilgrimage each year.

Divisions in Islam

Perhaps the largest split in the Islamic faith is the one between the Sunnis and the Shiites. The term Sunni is derived from the word Sunnah. Sunnah means one who follows the way of the prophet Muhammad. Shiite means one who politically departs from that path. It is estimated that there are nearly 800 million Sunnis throughout the world. The number of people who are practicing Shiites is about 155 million, and are spread out in many African, Arabic and a few Asian countries. However, Iran is the only Islamic country that is ruled by an established Shiite government. All other Islamic governments are Sunni, although the ruler may be a practicing Shiite (as in the case of Saddam Hussian of Iraq).

The Shiites believe that Ali, the cousin of prophet Muhammad, should have been the prophet's successor. However, Abu Bakr, one of the earlier faithful companions of the prophet, became the successor and leader or "caliph" of the Muslims after the death of prophet Muhammad. There were four successive caliphs in all. They were Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali. Ali was the fourth and last great caliph of the Islamic dynasty who actually lived during the time of the prophet. It was Abu Bakr who was supported by a vast

majority of Muslim leaders for the caliphate position, partly because the prophet Muhammad would entrust him with the leadership whenever he felt ill or was traveling. It was also Abu Bakr who, at a very critical time, held the believers together on the day of prophet Muhammad's death. He recited this verse to them from the Qu'ran: "O Mankind, if you have been worshipping Muhammad, then know that Muhammad is dead. But if you have been worshipping God, then know that God is living and never dies." This calmness proved his leadership abilities and as a result the Muslim community remained together and continued to grow and spread throughout the known world. And even this day, the Shiites have never gotten over Ali being passed over as the prophet's successor.

The Nation of Islam

Many people in America think of the Nation of Islam when they hear the term Muslim. However, the Nation of Islam represents only about a half of 1 percent of communities that claim to adhere to the Islamic faith. In fact, the Nation of Islam organization is not seen (by many world Muslim leaders) as a true representation of Islam. The

Nation of Islam was created during the early 1930s in Detroit, Mich., by W.D. Fard Muhammad. He taught his version of Islam to a small band of followers in a number of secret meetings and named the organization "The Lost Found Nation of Islam in the Wilderness of North America." One day Fard Muhammad disappeared and Elijah Muhammad, who was one of Fard's best students, became its leader. (A few years later he shortened the organization's name to the "Nation of Islam.")

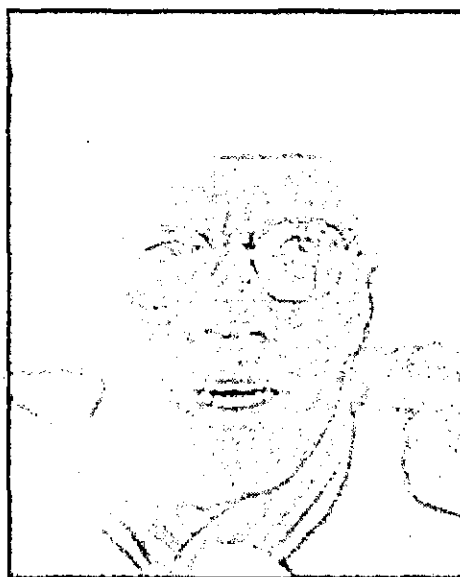
Very few people in America knew anything about the Nation of Islam. Then, in 1952, a man named Malcolm X (nee Malcolm Little) was released from prison and began to work with the man that he believed saved his life. That man was the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

Malcolm X hit the ground running, becoming top minister in just a few years. He created the strong elite force known as the "FOI or Fruit of Islam" to provide security for Minister Muhammad and

other important members. He created the *Muhammad Speaks* newspaper to help spread the word of Elijah Muhammad's teachings and movement.

During this time, many whites were very aware of the civil rights movements in the South. But for all the whites in the country who thought that the a Black movement was going on only in the South, two things happened in the North to change their thinking. First, a program appeared on television entitled *The Hate That Hate Produced*. It was about the Nation of Islam. Television cameras were allowed into Nation of Islam meetings and rallies. The Muslims gave interviews. Not too long after, a book called *The Black Muslims in America*, by Eric Lincoln, was published.

Many people in America were shocked. Here was a group of people who said that white people were the devil. This group believed that one day African Americans would rise up and destroy the white civilization. Most disturbing, they saw that the Nation of Islam wasn't just a strange little group. It was a popular, well-organized movement involving thousands of African Americans. This, many white people suddenly realized, was much more of a threat than the civil rights movement in the



Malcolm X, one of the most fiery and controversial blacks of the 20th century, as he is being interviewed during a Black Muslim demonstration in 1963.

See ISLAM next page

South.

That year, 1959, almost every publication in the United States wanted to do a story on the Muslims. Magazines and newspapers published articles about the Nation of Islam. Radio and television talk-show hosts wanted them on their programs. The person whom they wanted to interview more than anyone else was Malcolm X. He even started getting invitations to speak at top-notch universities such as Harvard, Rutgers and Brown. Malcolm had only a homemade education, yet he was addressing some of the country's brightest minds.

Many were taken aback at how straightforward Malcolm X was in his answers about what they perceived as his message of hate. Once, when asked why he preached "hate," Malcolm replied, "How can anybody ask us do we hate the white man who kidnapped us four hundred years ago, brought us here and stripped us of our history, stripped us of our culture, stripped us of everything you could have used today to prove that you're a part of the human family, bring you down to the level of an animal, sell you from plantation to plantation like a sack of wheat, sell you like a sack of potatoes, sell you like a horse and a plow, and then hung you up from one end of the country to the other, and then you ask me do I hate him? Why, your question is worthless!"

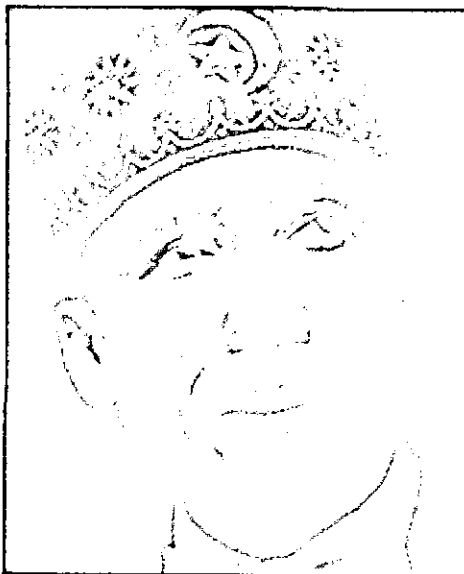
Malcolm X's public profile rivaled that of Nation of Islam founder Elijah Muhammad until he was gunned down on February 21, 1965 at the Audubon Ballroom in New York City.

In 1975, Elijah Muhammad died. His son, Wallace (W.D. or Warithudin) Muhammad, was chosen to lead the Nation of Islam. Wallace became the first African/Black Muslim born in the Nation with an Islamic name. Before his birth, his father (nee Elijah Poole) had the family's last name changed to Muhammad. Wallace never agreed with his father's teachings and, after becoming it's new leader, quickly changed the Nation's doctrine, aligning it more with traditional as practiced in the Middle East. He allowed members to enter politics or join the army—things his father would never have put up with. Wallace Muhammad even changed the name of the organization—first to the World Community of Islam in the West, and later to the American Muslim Mission. In 1985, Wallace resigned as leader, telling local mosques, or temples, to organize themselves.

During Wallace's leadership, many people became dissatisfied. Some left to form their own version of the Nation of Islam. The most well-known and successful was an organization led by Minister Louis Farrakhan. He left the World Community of Islam in 1978 and guided his supporters back to the strict teachings and beliefs of Elijah Muhammad. Minister Louis Farrakhan is probably one of

the most popular figures in the world today representing the Islamic faith. Still he is not recognized as a Muslim leader by most orthodox Muslims, who view him more as a Black nationalist leader.

Many Muslims point to what they view as the hypocritical tenets espoused on the back inside page of the Nation's newspaper *The Final Call*. The newspaper proudly proclaims under the title "What the Muslims Believe." It reads as follows: "WE BELIEVE that Allah (God)



Elijah Muhammad was the founder of what is now called the Nation of Islam, a Black Muslim faction grounded in black nationalism.

appeared in the Person of Master W. Fard Muhammad, July 1930; the long-awaited Messiah of the Christians and the Mahdi of the Muslims."

Such a declaration is strongly offensive to orthodox Muslims. In fact, if this statement were written or quoted openly by any Muslim in a predominantly Muslim country, it could possibly result in death. (This statement is tantamount to the one expressed by many Christians who claim that Jesus came in the person of God.) Muslims are very serious about their faith. However, in the case of the Nation of Islam, most are willing to look the other way, primarily because they see Minister Farrakhan as the only independent person in the world who's not afraid to stand up to powerful Western governments.

Many Orthodox Muslims feel that the new African American Muslims need more time to learn and understand the religion of Islam and to appreciate the many verses of the Qu'ran. Verses such as this one which clearly states: "Say: I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me that your God is one God. Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner." This verse says no man can be God.

Christian Perspective

Dr. Rev. Derrick Harkins, Senior Pastor New Hope Baptist Church and newly elected President of the Greater Dallas



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Community of Churches, sees culture as a retardant to Islam being widely embraced by the Christian community. "I think that there is an understood sense of a traditional link, in the church, that goes back to our fore-fathers and fore-mothers, in this country that makes it difficult for Islam to compete with. That link helps people find themselves. The church provides them with a style of worship that speaks to their comfort level. The church speaks to us from a cultural respect in terms of our style of worship and music. Islam falls short (and I say this as a friendly critic) because it is too broad a scope and appeal. Islam is often times misunderstood. Islam is much too open-ended to appeal to Christians.

For instance Muslims believe in God, they believe in doing good, they believe that a person will be punished in the hereafter if they do not keep God's commandments. All of these things the church teaches as well. The church, however, has been able to go a step beyond by giving people, especially African Americans who were castigated by slavery, a more comfortable racial identity. We find comfort in the church because everyone from the pastor to the congregation understands and sympathizes with that critical part of our past. Harmonizing with each other during services as we listen to some of the spiritual songs that helped us find liberation. You can not do these types of things in a mosque. Christians appreciate and respect the knowl-



Minister Louis Farrakhan

edge of faith in God that Islam emphasizes, but we have some unique American cultural struggles that we think must be addressed as well. And our place of worship can not be separate from that experience just as our ancestors did to liberate themselves and became models for people struggling against oppressors all over the world."

From Christianity to Islam

However, Fred Abdal-Ghaffar, the 49-year-old owner of an auto repair shop, found questions to his answers about religion in the practice of Islam.

"I was always curious about religion, because my family taught me to believe strongly in God. However, I never could

Continued on page 20

Fundamentals of Islam

The Five Pillars of Islam

1. Believe that there is no God but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God.
2. Prayer (Salat) five established times a Day.
3. Give Charity (Zakat) to the needy.
4. Fast (each year) during the holy month of Ramadan.
5. Make pilgrimage (Hajj) to holy city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia at least once in their lifetime.

Fundamental Articles of Faith

1. A true muslim believes in one god, supreme and eternal, Infinite and mighty, merciful and compassionate, creator and provider.
2. A true Muslim believes in all the messengers of God without any discrimination among them.
3. A true muslim believes in all scriptures and revelations of God. They were the guiding light which the messengers received to show their respective peoples the right path of God.
4. A true Muslim believes in the angels of God. They are purely spiritual and splendid beings whose nature requires no food or drink or sleep.
5. A true muslim believes in the last day of judgment. This world will

come to an end some day, and the dead will rise to stand for their final and fair trial.

6. A true Muslim believes in the timeless knowledge of God and in God's power to plan and execute God's plans.

7. A true Muslim believes that God's creation is meaningful and that life has a sublime purpose beyond the physical needs and material activities of man.

8. A true Muslim believes that mankind enjoys an especially high ranking status in the hierarchy of all the known creatures.

9. A true Muslim believes that every person is born "Muslim". This means that the very course of birth takes place in accordance with the Will of God, in realization of God's plans and in submission to God's commands.

10. A true Muslim believes that every person is born free from sin and all claims to inherited virtue. That every person is born with a blank book.

11. A true Muslim believes that mankind must work out their salvation through the guidance of God.

12. A true Muslim believes that faith is not complete when it is followed blindly or accepted unquestionably unless the believer is reasonably satisfied.

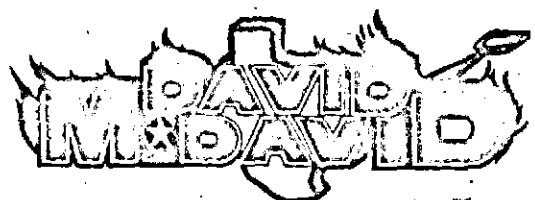
13. A true Muslim believes that the Qu'ran is the word of God revealed to Muhammad through the agency of the Angel Gabriel.

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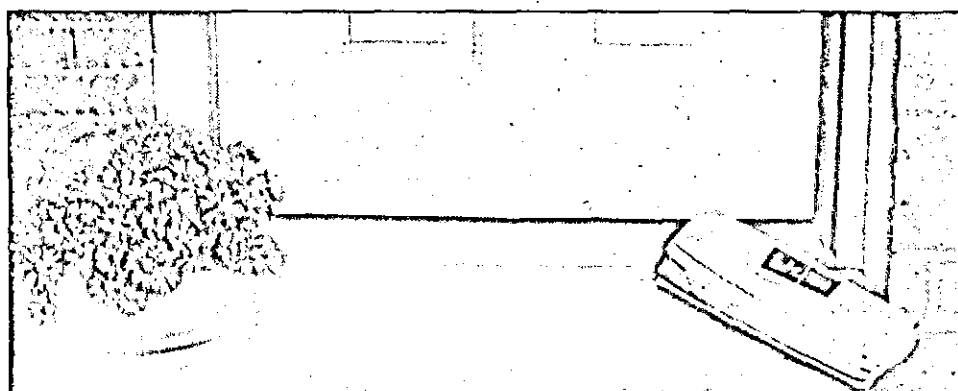
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Around Town

March 1

The Black Data Processing Associates, Dallas Chapter, is seeking high school seniors to apply for college scholarships that will be awarded at the BDPA Ninth Annual Scholarship Banquet on April 26, 1997. Application Deadline is March 15, 1997. To obtain an application, interested students should leave their name, address, and telephone number for Marilyn Neal at (972) 407-6895.

Casa Manana Children's Playhouse, 3101 W. Lancaster, Ft. Worth, Texas presents The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, through March 15. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Friday and 2:00 p.m. Saturday. All tickets are \$6.25. For tickets and more information call (817) 332-2272.

March 2

Attention Adult Athletes! Register your team for the Men's or Women's Basketball Leagues or the Coed Volleyball League sponsored by the Martin L. King, Jr. Recreation Center, 2901 Pennsylvania Ave., Dallas. Registration deadlines are March 10-14. Games begin this month at the Center. Call Darriet McDuff at (214) 670-8363 or (214) 670-0355 for more information.

Hoop Hunter Co-ed Basketball Ball Handling Clinics will be held at the Argyle Middle School gym, March 2, 9, 16 and 23 for boys and girls in 3rd through 8th grades. The gym is located five miles south of Denton off Hwy. 377. Clinics are held in groups of 3rd-5th graders and 6th-8th graders. To register call Deon Hunter at (972) 317-7245.

The Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 2701 Reagan Street, Dallas, is currently displaying a window art exhibit pro-

filing famous African American he-ros and she-ros. The exhibit will be on display until March 15. The center is open 7 days a week. For more information, contact Amy Hardin, Librarian, at (214) 521-5124.

March 3

Over sixty photographs of African Americans are included in the exhibition Black Dignity, on view at the Amon Carter Museum through May 11, 1997. These modern prints were made from negatives in the Everhard Collection, an accumulation of materials from several photographers' studios that operated in Leavenworth, Kansas from the 1870's into the 1940's. For more information call the Public Relations Office at (817) 738-1933 or e-mail ruthann.rugg@cartermuseum.org.

March 5

The Metroplex Area Consortium of Career Centers is sponsoring METRO JOB FAIR '97, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. today at the Arlington Convention Center, 1200 Ballpark Way, Arlington, Texas. Thirty-six colleges and universities have joined efforts to create "the Largest Metroplex Job Fair," with companies ranging from Areotek to Zale Corporation. This event is open to the public and admission for job-seekers is free. Please bring resumes. For more information call metro (817) 272-5213.

March 6

The Dallas County Adult Literacy Council presents its Fourth Annual "Celebrate Literacy Awards Luncheon," 12:00 noon, March 6, at the Wyndham Anatole Hotel, Stemmons at Market Center in Dallas.

The event will be hosted by WFAA News anchor, John McCaa. For more information call 214 (821) READ.

March 7

Soul Rep presents The Works of an Underground Mind, an evening of original poetry, visual art and musical exhibition March 7-8 at the African American Museum, Fair Park, Dallas. For more information call Soul Rep at (214) 565-0186 or the museum at (214) 565-9026.

March 8

Free Tax Preparation Seminar. Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson is sponsoring a Tax Information & Preparation Seminar, from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon at Heritage Park, 217 S. Main, Irving, Texas. Assistance will be provided by the Internal Revenue Service. For more information call Congresswoman Johnson's District Office at (214) 922-8885.

The Black State Employees Association of Texas is sponsoring its regular discrimination workshop today from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Eastgate Baptist Church, 6960 South Polk Street, Dallas. The workshop will provide the public with access to the officials of local government agencies responsible for civil rights in Dallas. The cost of the workshop is \$10.00. For more information call (214) 371-7710.

The Dallas/Ft. Worth Chapter of the Jackson State University National Alumni Association, Inc. is sponsoring a fashion show and dance 9:00 p.m. today at the Harvey Hotel, Spring Valley at Beltline Road in Addison. Proceeds from the event benefit a scholarship fund which serves students from the Metroplex while

they attend Jackson State University. For more information call John Brookins at (214) 388-8115.

The Oak Cliff Boys and Girls Club will host a "Beautiful Baby Contest" on March 8. For more information call (214) 372-4661.

Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., Dallas Chapter, is hosting its 16th Annual Juanita M. Johns Scholarship Luncheon, 12:00 noon, March 8 at the Radisson Hotel. For more information call (214) 948-4700.

March 9

St. Luke "Community" United Methodist Church is hosting its Annual Spring Revival, March 9-11, featuring The Rev. Dr. Michael Eric Dyson. Revival services will begin 6:00 p.m. Sunday and 7:00 p.m. Monday and Tuesday. For more information call the church at (214) 821-2970.

Pastor Linda 'Victoria' Morrow is the guest speaker at a Refreshing, Refiners Fire, Revival, 4:00 p.m., March 9 at 1800 Fourth and Birmingham in Sunny South Dallas. For more information call (214) 428-6065.

The Cathedral of Faith Baptist Church, 6901 S. Loop 12, Dallas, TX, will host its annual "Here's Hope" Spring Revival March 9-16 at 7:30 p.m. nightly. Rev. Nathan Johnson will be the guest evangelist. Free transportation and childcare are available each night. For more information call the church at (214) 398-7553.

March 10

Don't Get Left Out! The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Dallas, Inc. is hosting a

Around Town cont'd

variety of special events during the week of "Spring Break," March 10-14, at each of its nine clubs. For information on the club nearest you call (214) 821-2950.

March 12

The Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA), Dallas Chapter, invites you to attend its 1997 Volunteer Round-Up, 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. at the Center For Community Cooperation, Oak Corner Building, 2900 Live Oak St., Dallas. For more information call Connie Waters, SCDAA chapter at (214) 942-1262.

"Understanding Gay and Lesbian Issues and the Community" is offered monthly, the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 2701 Reagan Street, Dallas. The course is open to the public. For more information call Gil Flores or Dennis Myrick at (214) 528-9254.

March 13

Senior Citizens of Greater Dallas, the Senior Source is hosting a community forum, "Redefining Retirement," today from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the Oak Corner in the Center for Community Cooperation, 2900 Live Oak St., Dallas. Quality of Life issues will be presented by Dr. Franklyn Jenifer, Ph.D., president of the University of Texas at Dallas. Other speakers include Craig Rubin, M.D., a geriatrician and Liz Carpenter, former Press Secretary to Lady Bird Johnson. For more information call (214) 823-5700.

March 14

Baywatch co-star and critically-acclaimed author and activist, Greg Alan Williams will visit the Dallas area March 14-17 to speak with Dallas area youth. Williams will speak to young men, draw-

ing on themes from his new book, Boys to Men, Maps for the Journey, 6:00 p.m., March 14 at Black Images Bookstore, 230 Wynnewood Village, Dallas. On March 15, he will host a "Boys to Men Botillion," and on March 17, he will meet with the Youth Leadership Council of the Dallas Public Schools. For more information call Paul Bennett at (505) 757-6982.

March 15

Attention Phenomenal Women! (WE) Women Empowered Diversified Conference will be held today from 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at El Centro Community College, located at Lamar and Main, downtown Dallas. Honored guests include authors Rev. Dr. Sheron Patterson, A. Faye Boykin and Tammy Atkins, singer Sholanda Russell, and Bank of America executive Karen MacPherson. For more information call metro (817) 784-9950.

Strong Independent Sisters Taking Action, Inc. is sponsoring their first Annual "Express Yourself" Talent Showcase at Daniels School auditorium, 1933 Spikes St. at 7:00 p.m. today. Tickets are \$3.00 in advance and \$5.00 at the door. For more information call Cynthia Johnson at (972) 606-0924 or Angela Peters at (817) 860-6075. All proceeds benefit the rites of passage program and the scholarship fund.

The American Business Women's Association and the Dallas Area Council ABWA present LIFESKILLS 2000 from 8:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. at the Dallas Medalion Hotel, 4099 Valley View Lane, Dallas. The workshop gives attendees the chance to gain valuable insight into the challenges faced by women in the business world. For more information call Carmen Walker in Dallas at (972) 715-3683 or Ginger Kirby in Ft. Worth at (817) 336-2721.

Representative Yvonne Davis will host

two town Hall meetings on March 15 for constituents to share their concerns about major issues facing their communities and to update citizens on issues currently before the State Legislature. Locations and times are: Zula B. Wiley Public Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill, TX from 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. and Maria Morgan Branch YWCA, 1800 Bonnieview Road, Dallas, TX from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For more information call Rep. Davis' office at (214) 941-3895.

Sisters On The Move, Inc. (S.O.T.M.) presents a leadership training workshop, "Releasing your Positive Power," March 15 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at the Keist Park Recreation Center, 3800 S. Hampton Road, Dallas. For more information, call (972) 709-1180.

The Healing Circle Center, 6162 East Mockingbird Lane, #201, Dallas, will sponsor "Depression Warm Ups," an experimental seminar on the Body/Mind experience of Depression and "The Blues." The cost is \$20.00. Continuing Education Credits are available. For more information call (214) 827-2709 or (214) 503-8453.

March 19

The Mesquite Boys and Girls Club is hosting Art Career Speakers March 19 and 26. For more information call (972) 270-7645.

March 22

The Irving Black Arts Council presents Camp Logan, 8:00 p.m., March 22 at the Irving Arts Center, Carpenter Performance Hall, 3333 N. Macarthur, Irving, Texas. Admission is \$10.00 (\$8.00 for children and senior citizens). For more information call (972) 993-8444. For tickets call (972) 252-ARTS.

March 24

The Aids Resource Center is sponsoring its Seventh Annual Celebrity Auction, "A Salute to the Academy Awards," March 24 from 7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. at the Starck MCMXCVI, Dallas. For more information call (214) 521-5124.

March 28

Casa Manana Children's Playhouse, 3101 W. Lancaster, Ft. Worth, Texas presents The Velveteen Rabbit, March 28 - April 5. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Friday and 2:00 p.m. Saturday. All tickets are \$6.25. For tickets and more information call (817) 332-2272.

March 29


Due to popular demand, "AIDS 101: The Truth About AIDS" is being formatted into a 1 hour Spanish class. This FREE class will be held at the AIDS Resource Center, 2701 Reagan at Brown today from 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and offer a basic understanding of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. To register or for more information call (214) 521-5124.

The Jeffries Street Learning Center presents its 1997 Hoop-A-Thon 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament, today at Fair Park, Dallas. Proceeds from the tournament benefit the Center and its commitment to better the lives of underprivileged children in the Fair Park area. All players must be age 5 and over. To register or for more information call (214) 426-1834.

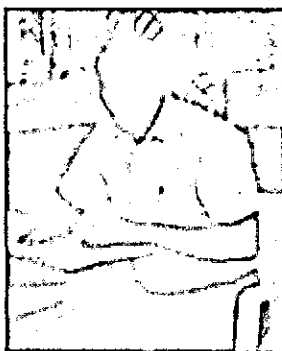
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understand how the African American community, it seemed, was always regressing and the Anglo community always progressed. Yet we practiced the same religion. I would always talk about religion with my buddies and the friends that I hung out with, but never could get the right answers. In 1968 I enrolled at Bishop College where I continued to try to get answers to my many questions. At Bishop I read a number of books on religion and occasionally I would stumble across statements about Islam. These captions showed pictures of White Muslims but none that were of dark skin, although all of the Muslims I knew were black. That seemed sort of suspicious to me. During this time I was married and my wife Shirley became pregnant with our first child. So in 1969 I quit college to work full time to support my family. I worked for about a year and a half when in 1971 I was drafted into the armed service. While in the military I read Alex Haley's



Yaseen Black

book, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and I became very inspired about Islam. However, I did not feel comfortable enough to except Islam at that time. After leaving service I went back home unconverted to raise my family. Then in 1983, while I was out at an African American community program. I met a friend who had excepted Islam and he asked me if I would attend a "Juma'a" (congregational prayer) service with him and I did. After careful study of Islam, Christianity and other theologies, on March 11, 1984 I excepted the religion of Islam as my way of life. And I have been a practicing Muslim since."

Omar Saleem is the National Program Director for the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, the largest Muslim charity in America. Saleem, 35, found the Christian concept of the "trinity" unsettling and did not find true spiritual well-being until discovering Islam.

Says Saleem: "When I was a youngster going to church I would always ask our family's preacher and other area preachers questions about the Christian faith. I wanted to understand the trinity concept, the concept of three gods in one, and about Jesus being God's son. I never could find anyone to explain it in any rational way that was comfortable to me. In New York, my home town, there were many groups in the community that taught a variety of theologies with religious overtones. There was the Nation of Islam, the Marcus Garvey-ites, the Moorish Scientists and others of nationalistic points of view most of which I loved. However, none of them had that spirituality that I was looking for as I was accustomed to, like in my Baptist roots. Although the important answers that I sought were not to be found in the church. There was still that strong spiritual part of the church that I always loved like faith in God. It was only after I received my first copy of the Holy Qu'ran, the Muslim holy book, that I found the answers to the questions that I sought as well as that sense of spirituality essence of belief in God that I needed."

While many people claim Islam marked the end of a search for spiritual fulfillment, some, like Yaseen (Jason) Black, a 23-year-old chiropractic student at Parker College of Chiropractic, was first exposed to Islam by happenstance. Says Yaseen: "I was born in Lawton, Okla., and raised in the Methodist Church by pretty devout practicing parents. Living in Lawton, no one in my family ever talked about Islam. Surprisingly, even though I lived near Washington, D.C., where I found later had one of the largest Muslim communities in America, I never knew anything about Islam or Muslims. It was while attending Radford University in Virginia after becoming friends with an Iraqi female student that I found out about the religion of Islam. She had been raised as a Muslim back home but she had not been practicing Islam while in America. However, she still had a strong love and respect for Islam.

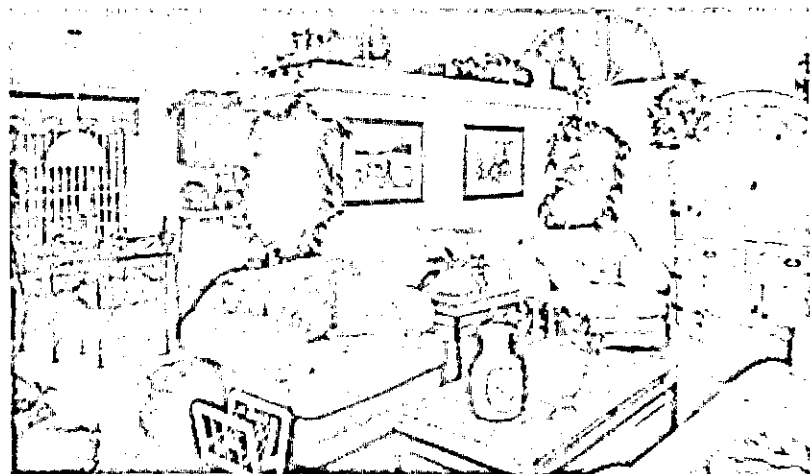
"She and I used to study religions. We had debates and many discussions around various subjects. Things like if there really was a God and, if so, where was God? We found that within the Christian religion many ethnic groups try to make Christianity fit into their ethnicity. For instance, in China the Chinese created prophet Jesus in their image, while in many white churches Jesus is white and in most black churches, he is black. While studying the Bible we found that, based upon the description given, Jesus definitely was a person of color. The Qu'ran makes no references to the color of any of the prophets, including Jesus and Muhammad. Only their missions are discussed. Color coding in religion is wrong.

"Finally, about three years ago, I [converted] to the religion of Islam. My friend also has started to practice again as well. My parents have been very supportive, especially my mom. I have a twin brother and he too has [converted] just this past January. I truly believe that Islam is a religion that all Americans should study for themselves."

MON

Thomas Muhammad is a regular columnist for the Minority Opportunity News.

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Texas Veterans Land Board
Garry Maure, Chairman

Tea Cake Kids

Entrepreneur combines business with a message

By Whitney Larkins

Children scurry around and play. Mothers quickly tend to them to keep them from "messing" with the hair bows and socks hanging on the rack. A woman in the front of the store is dressed in African garb as she reads poetry to the small children.

This is a typical

scene at "Tea Cake Kids," an African-American clothing store owned and operated by Jonquil Akhir. The goal of the store is to promote self-esteem among African American children. The clothing in the stores has applique' and pictures of brown and black faces of children.

"Tea Cake Kids" was founded by Ms. Akhir seven years ago. The idea for the store came to her on a Sunday during church service.

"A little girl (in church) had on a shirt with white kids on it... The idea was given to me by God," Akhir said. "I wanted to develop a clothing line to promote self-esteem for black children. I felt there were not enough clothes that little black children could identify with."

Ms. Akhir grew up in a household of five children: four girls and a boy. Akhir, the oldest girl, had a unique job around the house. Her sister, Monica Tanner, remembers the days when Akhir began sewing.

"She made our doll clothes. She also made me an outfit to wear to a Jackson Five concert (when they came to Dallas)," Tanner said.

Akhir was a 1973 graduate of Skyline High School, and she later attended El Centro College and Texas Tech University. She has a degree in fashion design.

Saturday, February 8, was a bitter-sweet day for Akhir and the "Tea Cake Kids" store. The date marked the seventh anniversary of the store's existence, and it also marked the last day that the store would be open.

"I'm moving the business back into my home. I'm moving to a location that I can afford, I travel a lot and I'm never at the store," Akhir said. "I'm concentrating more on shows and mail-ordering. I sell wholesale to stores, hospitals, and gift shops."

Akhir has had offers from many major department stores, but she has already made plans for the next seven years of her business.

"I have a show-room at the World Trade Center where people can see my representative. I have markets in New York and Atlanta where I pick up customers," she said.

Akhir offers some do's and don'ts for would-be entrepreneurs. The do's she offered are to "think, pray and ask God to lead and guide. Research and find out what you need to know about what you want to do. Ask questions of the person in the business," she said. "Don't quit your job at first. Don't depend on others to do what you know you need to do."

MON

Whitney Larkins is a senior at Duncanville High School and will be a regular contributor to this column.

Name: Jonquil Akhir
Birthplace: Dallas, Tx.
Favorite Food: Seafood
Last Book Read: Black Entrepreneur's Guide to Success

My friends don't know that: "I can be mean sometimes."

Advice to would-be entrepreneurs: "Be ready to think hard about what you need to do to remain dedicated. Have a lot of patience."



Tea Cake Kids
972-225-8357

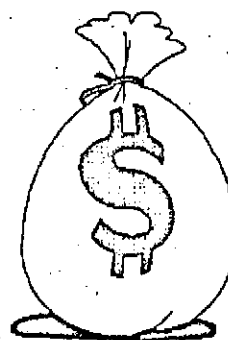
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Tammy Taylor
Guest reviewer

A Little Yellow Dog (An Easy Rawlins Mystery)

By Walter Mosley
(Norton, 300 pages/\$23.00)

He's on President Bill Clinton's list of favorite authors, and he's seen one of his novels, *Devil in a Blue Dress*, turned into a major Hollywood movie starring Denzel Washington.

The he is mystery writer Walter Mosley, well known to fans of the genre and to those simply looking for a good read. Reading a Walter Mosley mystery is like sitting down with a good friend who tells you a juicy story over coffee and dessert. You are attentive and curious, laughing, questioning, empathizing and sympathizing in all the right places.

Mosley is a grand storyteller with a simplistic, clear writing style that hypnotizes readers and pulls them into the world of fictional character Ezekiel "Easy" Rawlins, a kind of Jack-of-all-trades who is the star of six of Mr. Mosley's seven novels.

Easy Rawlins is a black World War II veteran who, after losing his plant job, turns to using his street savvy for hire in the Watts section of Los Angeles during the mid 1950s and 1960s. Rawlins is a self-styled sleuth/investigator, and sometimes land-owner who does "favors" for friends, neighbors and enemies.

"It is a real country way of doing business..." said Easy in Mosley's 1991 novel, *A Red Death*. "People would come to me if they had serious trouble but couldn't go to the police. Maybe somebody stole their money or their illegally registered car. Maybe they worried about their daughter's company or a wayward son. I settled disputes that would have otherwise come to bloodshed. I had a reputation for fairness and the strength of my conviction among the poor."

Easy's favors sometimes get him in trouble with the law—people often turn up dead, with Easy being the suspected killer. Good cops and bad cops use their suspicions of the nature of Easy's street life to threaten him, as well as hustle him to do favors.

Easy juggles his hectic "professional" life with being a single parent raising

two young adopted children, Jesus and Feather, who were abandoned. The children find love and acceptance with Easy. The narrative regarding his life with these children is just as entertaining as that concerning his life on the street.

Mr. Mosley released two Easy Rawlins mysteries in 1996, the hot off the presses *Gone Fishin*, released in December of 1996, and *A Little Yellow Dog*, released in the summer of 1996.

A Little Yellow Dog is the subject of this review and readers will find more enjoyment and appreciation for Easy's early years by reading his previous works before indulging in "Gone Fishin," which takes the reader back to Easy's teen years as a hood on the street.

In *A Little Yellow Dog*, Mr. Mosley has given Easy a break from the mean Los Angeles streets. Easy takes a job as head custodian at Sojourner Truth Junior

High, where he wears a suit each day and supervises a small staff. He maintains a civil life as a father and provider for about two years, then trouble finds him again.

School teacher Idabelle Turner brings her dog to school to hide it from a husband who threatens to kill it. Easy confronts the curvaceous and popular teacher,

reminding her that dogs are not allowed on the property. The teacher seduces Easy with her body and a tale of woe, and before you can blink an eye, Easy is the new guardian of the little yellow dog, Pharaoh, who doesn't like Easy any more than Easy likes him.

The teacher and her husband are soon missing. Bodies start appearing everywhere, and Easy must uncover the truth before the police arrest him on suspicion of murder.

A Little Yellow Dog, is yet another suspenseful, fast-moving Walter Mosley mystery with colorful characters who are so real they seem to jump off the pages. Take, for instance, Easy's best friend, Raymond "Mouse" Alexander, "a natural-born killer who would just as soon kill you as to look at you."

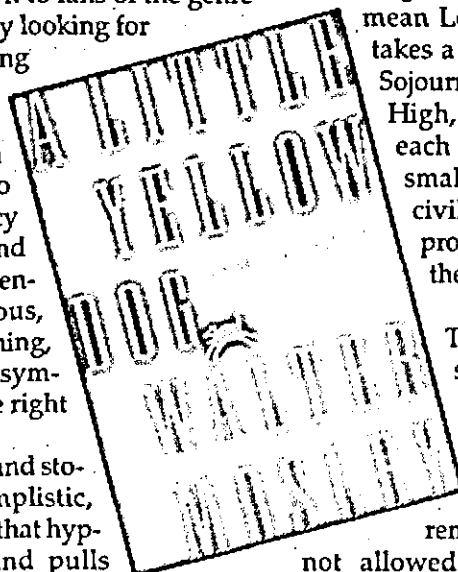
In Easy Rawlins, Mosley has created a smooth-talking social commentator who gives readers the taste of urban Los Angeles through his intimate descriptions of people's instinct and quest for survival. He parallels a tragedy in his personal life with the concurrent death of then president John F. Kennedy.

Although cliché and a common end

to a review of a Walter Mosley mystery, it merits writing again that readers will be hungry to learn what Easy, Pharaoh, Jesus, Feather, and a possible new girlfriend will be up to next.

Walter Mosley takes a delightful side trip with *Gone Fishin*, but fans will harass him to continue Easy's journey into the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000...

MON



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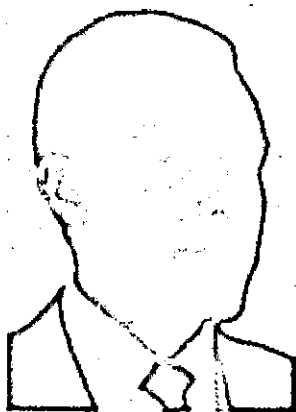
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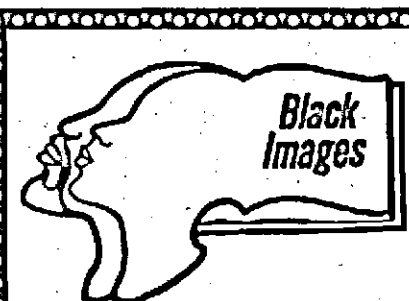


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A look at female radio personalities in D/FW

By Dorothy Gentry

Contributing Writer

Thanks to all of you who called about last month's column on female on-air personalities in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. You asked for it and here it goes, a complete list of the female personalities in urban/black radio, including those who do the news. As we know, radio is a changing business, so by the time you read this, more changes could have been made. You just never know...

KKDA-AM (Soul 73)

Iola Johnson: news anchor, 5-9 a.m., Monday-Friday, full time; Brenda Teele: weather, *The Willis Johnson Morning Show*, 5-9 a.m., Monday-Friday, full-time; Trisha Hodge: news reporter, Monday-Friday, part-time

KKDA-FM (K104)

Nanette Lee: *Skip Murphy and Co. Morning Show*, 5-9 a.m.; Monday-Friday, full-time; Boss: *Tight at Night Crew*, 6-10 p.m., Monday-Friday, full-time.

KRNB-FM (105 dot 7)

Wendy Schoffield: *The Breakfast Bunch*, 5-10 a.m. Monday-Friday full-time; Eva Gray - on-air personality; Fridays; midnight to 5 a.m.; part time; Tina Darwin: on-air personality, weekends, part-time.

KRBV-FM (V100)

Sandra Daniels: news director, 5-9 a.m., Monday-Friday, full-time; Yvonne St. John: on-air personality, noon-3 p.m., Monday-Friday, full-time; Pam Gibson: weekends, part-time; Denise Edwards: weekends, part-time; Shewanda Riley: host, *Sunday Inspirations*, 8 a.m., part-time.

KHVN-AM (Heaven 97)

Shewanda Riley: co-host, Morning

Show, 5-9 a.m., Monday-Friday, full time; Ketrana Bryant: on-air personality; 9 a.m. to noon; Monday-Friday; full time; Carmen Brown: on-air personality; 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Monday-Friday; full time; Shae Ireland: co-host *Saturday Night Praise Party*, 6-9 p.m.; part time; Andrelle Perry: on-air personality, noon-6 p.m., Sundays, part-time.

That's a whole lot of black women taking care of business in the radio industry.

Unfortunately, and once again according to the list, the only full-time female, on-air personalities with their own show are V100's Yvonne St. John and Heaven 97's Carmen Brown and Ketrana Bryant. Now why is that?

.....

The Dallas Mavericks aren't the only team in town that's under construction. New station KRNB-FM (105 dot 7) continues to evolve. Its morning show, *The Breakfast Bunch*, has undergone some serious renovations in the past month. Out are Valerie Moore and Johnathon Hayes, who along with Steve Woods made up the team. In are Wendy Schoffield and Mike Thomas. Mike Thomas may sound more familiar if I call him Gorby. That's right, Mike Thomas, who did traffic reports as KRNB's "Fly-Guy in the Sky" and who became a household name doing traffic on K104's *Skip Murphy and Co. Morning Show* as Gorby is now the new sidekick on *The Breakfast Bunch*. Listen at 5 a.m.

.....

Alicia Speed is the new sister doing traffic on K104's morning show. She is also the new "Fly gal in the sky" for KRNB.

.....

Be sure and join KRNB's Jo-Jo Davis (M-F, 3-7 p.m.) on Thursday and Fridays at Prime Time 21 for Happy Hour and Q. Storm host Rudy V (M-F, 7 p.m.-midnight) on Saturdays at Prime 21...Eva Gray's new shift at KRNB is Friday, midnight to 5 a.m.

Pen Notes

By Cheryl Smith

Get well wishes are extended to KDFW-TV's Marjorie Ford. She is home convalescing after surgery and we wish her well. Marjorie works hard at Fox 4 News making sure that *Insights* continues to be an award winner...Speaking of *Insights*, there were supposed to be some changes, namely focusing entirely on the African American communities. We're waiting to see...Have you seen the Sunday edition of the *Dallas Morning News* lately? Well, Norma Adams-Wade and Mercedes Olivera's columns have been moved from page 2 of the Metro section and replaced by Larry Powell. So, that means if you just subscribe on weekends, you'll miss anybody of color totally. We congratulated the DMN for adding Esther Wu as a regular columnist; however the other changes are very disappointing and has the African American and Latino communities upset. I've received numerous calls from folk who want to do everything from protest to dumping their Sunday papers on the steps of the DMN. It's embarrassing, though, that so many have benefitted from Norma's column, but they won't sit their trifling rears down and write a letter of support. We'll forget that they never send thank you notes, but let's be for real!!!! Governor Bush says he doesn't have time to speak at the National Association of Black Journalists Regional Conference, which is being sponsored by American Airlines, KTVT-TV, Fort Worth Star Telegram, WFAA, Mothers Against Teen Violence, Kroger Foods, Our Texas, Minority Opportunity News, KDFW-TV, KXAS-TV, Six Flags Over Texas and the Texas Publishers Association. Well, we'll

see what he has to say when he decides to run for president and he wants to come to the national convention. His people in the state of Texas will remember him....But don't you forget to mark your calendars for March 20-23 for the Conference and Job Fair at the Harvey Hotel-Brookhollow, featuring a number of speakers, including *Emerge* magazine's George Curry, WNBC-NY's Paula Walker and KKDA's Iola Johnson. Call (214) 852-0588 for more information...Speaking of Iola, she can also be heard on weekends at KRLD... Word has it that a certain assistant news director is leaving Dallas. Hopefully that station will find another African American at the NABJ Region VII Conference!!!! There are a lot of rumblings going on at KDFW-TV, also. We'll tell you about them real soon...Congratulations to former K104 traffic guy Gorby, who is now one third of the *Breakfast Bunch* on KRNB. He joins Steve Woods and Wendi Scofield...Try tuning in to KTCY-FM, 104.9 where Willie Mae McGiver is the program director. The station hit the airwaves in late February and is Dallas' first 24 hour urban contemporary gospel station...I heard Sweet Willie Mitchell over at V100!!! Well, stay tuned for more....Mark your calendars and listen for more information on the Don't Believe the Hype celebrity bowl-a-thon, sponsored by Eller Media, Mesa National, AT&T and a host of others and scheduled for June 28, 1997 at Don Carter's West, 10920 Composite Drive...GET READY!!!! Drew Barry is moving back to the east coast to become the news director and operations manager for a popular station. Kevin "Smokin B" is joining the new religious station KTCY-FM 104.9. Question of the month: How many African American managers does KXAS-TV have?

CLS

The Dallas Ministerial Alliance has named KKDA's Willis Johnson its "Humanitarian of the Year" for his tireless efforts on behalf of the African American communities in Dallas/Fort Worth and surrounding cities. *The Willis Johnson Morning Show* can be heard on KKDA-730 (AM) 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. Monday-Friday.

Valerie Moore is back in stride in again. The former member of KRNB's *Breakfast Bunch* now does weekends, midnight to 8 a.m., on KRLD-AM Newsradio 1080. Stay tuned to see where she surfaces next.

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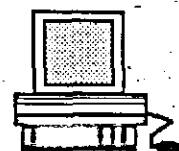
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Umphrey Lee School's Oratorical Competition Delights Audience

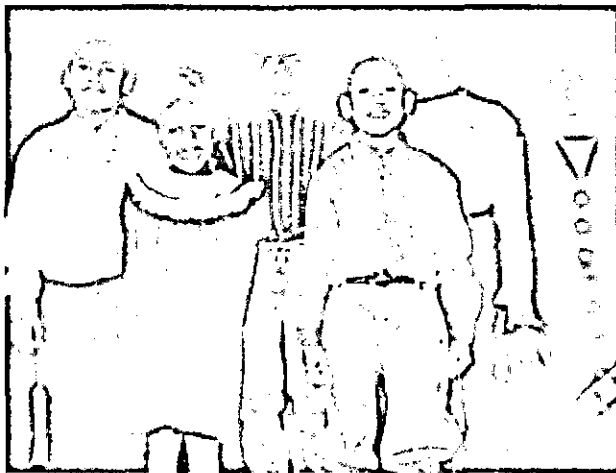
While other schools were celebrating "Black History Month" by merely reading or writing about notable African Americans, students at Umphrey Lee Elementary School decided to take it a bit further. They honored their favorite poet (both African American and non-African American) by stepping into their shoes and presenting rousing renditions of the students' favorite poems. The Oratorical Competition, organized by teacher Alfreda Cannon, provided a platform for students in three categories, pre-kindergarten to first grades, second to third grades and fourth to sixth grades, to showcase their distinctive talents.

Complete with an expressiveness not usually displayed in children this age, the students tackled, among other poems, the sophisticated ballads of Maya Angelou, the humorous scrawl of Shel Silverstein, and the glaring reality of Langston Hughes.

Each child was judged on a variety of criteria, including expression and delivery, memorization, distinctiveness of enunciation and pronunciation, eye contact with audience and poise. Judging the contest were Air Force officers Captain Leland Stanford, Sergeant Greg Ceaser and Sergeant Rodney Williams. All three are involved in a mentoring program with Umphrey Lee students and regularly visit the school to offer encouragement and guidance.

Sergeant Williams, also a journalist, lauded Umphrey Lee for its efforts in organizing the oratorical contest and

stressed the importance of a competition of this type. "I applaud Umphrey Lee for creating an opportunity for kids to speak publicly," he said. "Throughout history, you notice that most great leaders have



Oratorical Contest Winners (l-r) Markquise Rodriguez, Deborah Burks, Donnell Hanson, Jordan Robinson, Kedra Easkine, Dorothy Humphrey

great oratorical and communication skills. The more chances they get to speak, the more they enhance their leadership abilities. Umphrey Lee is grooming these children to be leaders of the future."

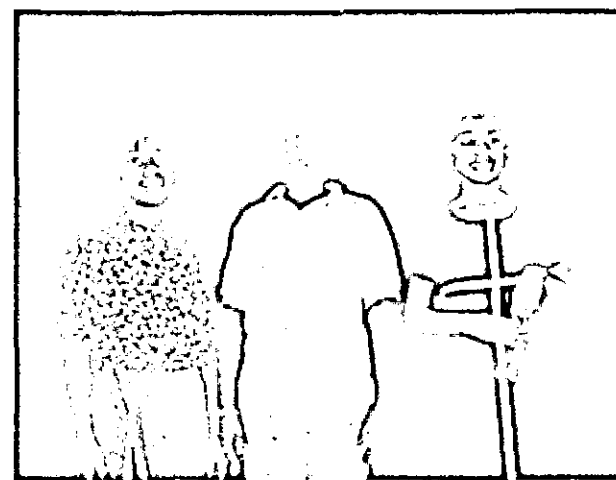
Because of the prolonged rehearsals, both in school and at home, and the resulting lessons learned about the value of hard work and practice, each participant was viewed a winner by the judges. "As recruiters and professional speakers, we know how hard it is to speak in front of a group, no matter how old you are," said Sergeant Ceaser. "It's refreshing to know that our kids have the skills and motivation to perform this well, especially in light of the ebonics controversy. Our children are resilient and can learn anything we teach them."

Two students, third grader, Dorothy

Humphrey and sixth grader, Jade Singleton, in separate performances, opted to take on Maya Angelou's epic, *Phenomenal Woman*. While boldly, demonstrated the "stride of my step" and the "grace of my style," the girls' rendition elicited enthusiastic response from the audience

"It's refreshing to know that our kids have the skills and motivation to perform this well...Our children are resilient and can learn anything we teach them."

of peers, teachers and parents. But it was sixth grader Melanie Matlock's enthralling execution of Langston Hughes' *The Negro Mother*, that earned her first



Oratorical Contest Winners (l-r) Melanie Matlock, DeAndre Island, Jade Singleton

place in the contest's fourth to sixth grade category.

In the second to third grade category, Kedra Easkine powerfully executed Angelou's *Still I Rise* to also win first place. And in the pre-kindergarten to first grade category, Jordan Robinson took first place with the short charming poem, *Books To the Ceiling*.

The audience was further entertained by the animated performances of *When Willy Ate the Chili* by Jack Prelutsky, performed by fourth grader Ivan Pickles and *Kidnapped* by Shel Silverstein, performed by fifth grader DeAndre Island.

First grader Markquise Rodriguez delighted and surprised family and friends as he pulled his hair and punched his arm in his presentation of *The New Kid on the Block*. "I'm really proud of my son; he worked very hard," said Markquise's father, Jose Rodriguez. "I hope he keeps reciting poems."

Fortunately, the oratorical competition was also an ideal time for the Umphrey Lee school choir, expertly led by choir director, Mrs. Donnell, to flaunt their talents. Clad in red shirts and black pants or skirts, the choir harmoniously proclaimed message after message of hope and inspiration. As they belted, *I Believe I Can Fly*, audience members sang along in a fitting tribute to the current and future accomplishments of their fellow students.

Captain Stanford, commenting on the success of the program said, "I'm amazed at the level of talent of children at their ages. This competition proves that with determination and practice, they can succeed; they truly can do anything they put their minds to."

MON

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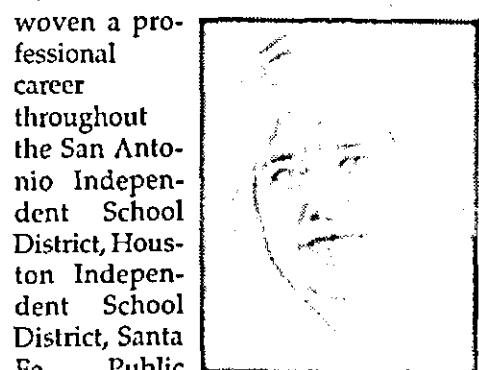
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Yvonne Gonzalez-Lyles gives DPS "State of the District" Address

By Tai E. Jones

Contributing Writer

Flanked by Dallas' corporate cream of the crop, Dallas Public Schools Superintendent Yvonne Gonzalez-Lyles pledged her service to parents, students and citizens of Dallas during the annual State of the District Address. An address filled with her personal Texas threads, which have



Gonzalez-Lyles

woven a professional career throughout the San Antonio Independent School District, Houston Independent School District, Santa Fe Public Schools and now, Dallas, Gonzalez-Lyles gave numerous testimonials of success from previous experiences with other colleagues and districts throughout her two-screen briefing. The superintendent emphasized the special educational needs that exist in diverse urban schools and the importance of "children of color," receiving every possible benefit from the resources that corporate America united in partnership with the district can provide.

"My priority is to accelerate the rate of achievement for all students," stated Dr. Gonzalez-Lyles. "My focus is technology and its incorporation into all aspects of the learning experience."

To accelerate students' rate of achievement, Dallas Public Schools has developed and implemented state-of-the-art teaching methods, much like the district-wide "Dallas Reading Program," which serves as a model for the educational reform curriculum in all areas. In order to bring technology into the schools, the superintendent plans to incorporate computers into every classroom, coupled with extensive training for teachers. Additionally, the superintendent's Action Plan for Student Success includes the recruitment of more bilingual educators and staff members for the growing numbers of Hispanic students both to the district and those who have limited English proficiency.

Much to the credit of the superintendent and the district, DPS students continue an upward trend in reading and math on statewide and national achievement tests with the most significant gains posted by African American and Hispanic students. According to the Texas

Education Agency, the number of low-performing schools are at an all time low, dropping from 34 schools two years ago to only three this year. These gains are remarkable in light of the fact that a percentage of children who are economically deprived has increased within the district. Overall trends on both the Iowa Basic Skills and Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) Test show improvement by Dallas students in all grades tested and upward progress in areas tested, particularly mathematics. Those graduating seniors taking the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), required for college admission, increased by 3 percent; nationally, 41 percent of graduates took the SAT, compared to 46 percent of DPS graduating seniors.

Other achievements noted by the superintendent were the eight new campuses to open during the 1997 school year and the fact that Dallasites have never rejected the need for a bond program. Dr. Gonzalez-Lyles referenced many new initiatives as concentration areas for the district. These areas of "where we should be going," include Higher Thinking Skills, Instructional Technology, Reading Instruction, Early Childhood Education, Bilingual Education, Alternative Education, Safety & Security, Additional Schools and Community & Corporate Support.

Following the address, Gonzalez-Lyles received a token of appreciation from the Dallas Black Chamber, the Dallas Asian Chamber and the Dallas Hispanic Chamber. The collective support from these leaders seemed to subdue the previous racially-charged attacks of the superintendent by organizations such as the NAACP and the New Black Panther Party. Throughout her briefing, she purposely omitted the discussion of racial confrontations from both Hispanics and African Americans that have disrupted school board meetings and questioned her qualifications to address the needs of "all" of the children of the district.

"This was a call to action. It was a call for the business community to join hands with us on a very solid front to move this district forward," said Gonzales-Lyles. Sighing, she added, "We are going to succeed despite a handful of people who want to disrupt meetings for a political agenda rather than education." Ironically, Superintendent Gonzalez-Lyles did feature via video an outspoken participant in many of the board meetings, local Hispanic lawyer Adelfa Callejo.

The breakfast was sponsored by Frito-Lay and the Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce.

MON

The Deadly Merchant: Three years later

By Dorothy Gentry

Contributing Writer

Editor's Note: "The Deadly Merchant" was MON's October 1994 cover story. It won the 1995 Texas Publishers Association Award for best feature story.

Last month, a Tarrant County jury found Korean-American grocer Jason Noh guilty of murder for the 1994 shooting death of Darrell Bivins outside Noh's store, Jacob's Food Mart, on East Berry Street in Fort Worth.

Noh, 27, was sentenced to 9 years in prison by a jury of 10 whites and two blacks.

The shooting of Bivins three years

ago ignited a firestorm of racial disunity in Fort Worth's predominantly black neighborhood of Stop Six. Many black residents began picketing the store, which eventually closed.

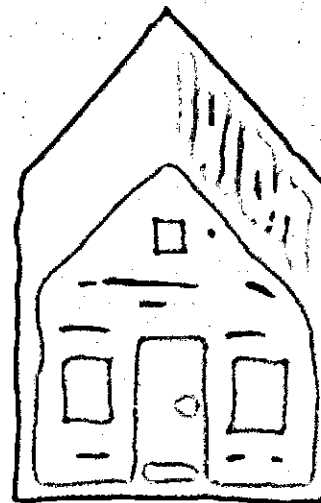
The decision last month marked the second time Noh had been on trial for the shooting of Bivins, which he admitted to as an act of self-defense.

The jury could not reach a verdict during the first trial last year and ended up deadlocked.

After the shooting incident, Noh maintained that Bivins had previously been shoplifting in his store and that he was trespassing the night he was shot.

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Herb Beckford

Playing the stock market with \$500

In the last issue (February), I said that I would highlight some companies that you could invest in for as little as \$500. With a commission cost of \$29, you would be left with \$471 to actually purchase stock.

To obtain the most production out of that investment, it was suggested a purchase be made of at LEAST 50 shares. A round lot (100 shares) is better, but you have to play with what you have; in this case it is \$471.

Also to be taken into consideration is the minimum needed to recover the initial investment, plus a reasonable return. With a purchase of 100 shares, if a stock advances one point, you've made \$100, excluding commission. Therefore, with a purchase of 50 shares, a stock would have to advance two points for one to obtain that same \$100. Taking the scenario a step further, a purchase of 25 shares makes the recovery more difficult. It means for you to realize that \$100, the

stock has to climb four points. That's a hefty move and especially in low-priced securities.

Well, I'm going to do an about-face. Why? Because it is easy for me to list three companies which, in my opinion, would be appreciably rewarding. But after you make the purchase, then what? That's what prompted the about-face and brings to mind the subject, "When To Sell".

Hopefully, you have picked the right stock at the right time. It is here that you have to establish some type of system for selling. Again, in baseball parlance; just learn to hit singles, learn to meet the ball and hit it solidly.

If you buy something at the right time and you're up 25 percent to 30 percent, take it. Prove that you can buy it right and sell it right. If you make mistakes, and you will, cut the loss. How much of a loss? I've found the advice of William O'Neil (Founder of Investor's Business Daily) more to my way of thinking. His 7 percent to 8 percent cut has never gotten him into trouble. As he states, "I have never gotten into a jam. I can get kicked around a bit, but they can't take it all away from me." Makes sense? But keep doing this and sooner or later that portfolio will build in size.

One irritant that might be, is the selling of a stock that subsequently goes up an additional 100 percent or more. FORGET ABOUT IT. Just prove that you can buy it right and nail down a profit. Mind you, if you don't do that, half of them will come right back down again.

The sweet thing is that you can buy a stock coming out of a base and it can go up that 25 percent to 30 percent in two or

three months. If you get two or three of those in a row, you've doubled your account.

Don't be skeptical just because a stock has a low price. Theragenics (THR) was a five dollar stock in May '95 and is now (2/19/97) selling at 20 1/4. Guilford Pharmaceutical (GLFD) was a four dollar stock in November '94 and closed (2/19/96) at 28 1/2. There are countless other examples I

could share with you.

In a later column, I will list three low-priced securities (keeping in mind the initial \$500 investment) that are not to be construed as a pattern for future selections.

MON

Herb Beckford is a successful personal investor. Write to him c/o MON or send email to herb@evergreen.com.

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Black Chambers Association steps into cyberspace

TAAACC receives \$57,000 award from AT&T to upgrade communications

From the TPA wire service

AUSTIN—The Texas Association of African American Chambers of Commerce (TAAACC) is preparing to take its members and constituents into the future via cyberspace. The organization, which is a consortium of 15 African American Chambers of Commerce, recently accepted a \$57,000 award from AT&T in support of the chamber's efforts to upgrade communication to its members.

Jennings. "We want to make use of other modes of communication, like the internet."

Jennings' main goal is to ensure the member chambers can quickly and effectively disseminate information vital to the growth and survival of their businesses. Initially the organization will establish internet links between the National Black Chamber of Commerce in Dallas, the TAAACC state office in Austin, and about five other chamber

• Opposing and eliminating legislation detrimental to TAAACC constituency.

Jennings says that with an internet connection, member chambers, constituents, and the general public will receive the most current information on issues affecting minority businesses. Currently the TAAACC's effort is focused on opposing the deletion of Article 9 of the Appropriation Bill for the state of Texas. Article 9 would eliminate reporting used to identify use of HUBs (historically underutilized businesses).

"We have a constituency that is doing business with the state," says Jennings. "If Article 9 is deleted, there will be no reporting mechanism for state agencies governing HUBs and EEOC. Through the internet, we can generate calls to congressmen to say do not support the bill. We can instantly create a lobby."

In addition to providing lobbying opportunities, Jennings says bulletin boards on the internet can supply a wealth of information from many agencies, including the Texas Department of Commerce. The TDC's bulletin board lists among other things, bid proposal requirements and tips on how to do business with the agency, information vital to many of the TAAACC constituents.

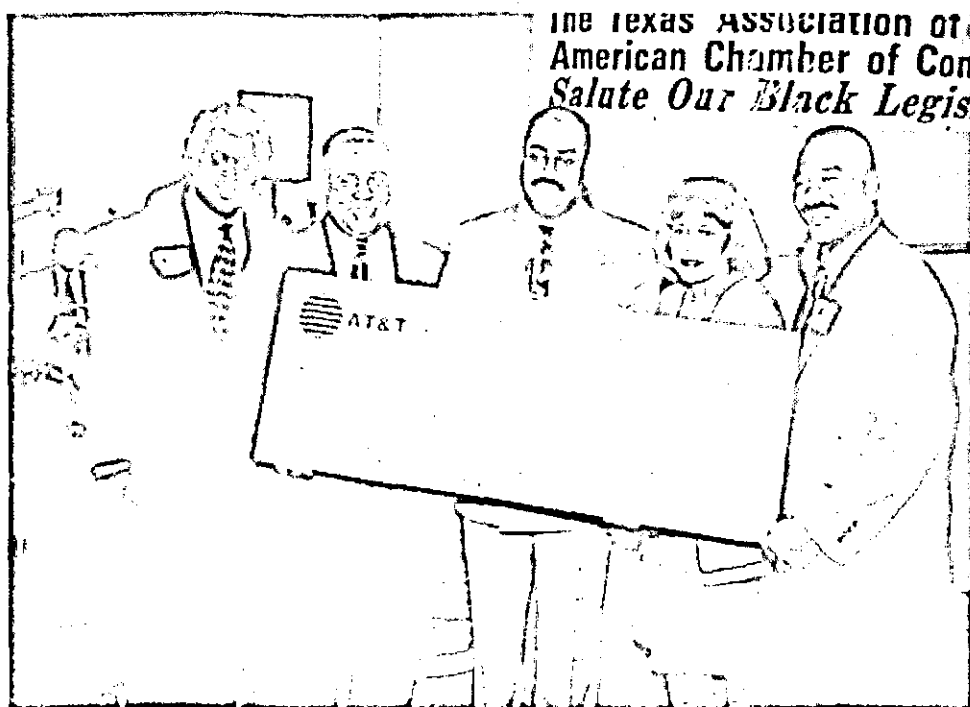
Businesses without access to computer equipment or the internet can use the equipment at any of the TAAACC member chambers to ensure they have access to all the TAAACC and the internet has to offer. Jennings believes that the

internet holds the key to financial success and economic empowerment for entrepreneurs.

Computers, he says, are the wave of the future when it comes to making money.

"Like the TAAACC motto says," says Jennings, "it's time for 'silver' rights."

MON



(l-r) Devoyd Jennings, President of TAAACC, State Rep. Glenn Lewis, Fort Worth Sen. Rodney Ellis, Houston State Rep. Helen Gidding, Dallas

The award, presented to the Association in February at a reception honoring African American state legislators, represented AT&T's TAAACC membership fee in addition to a grant from the AT&T Foundation. "The purpose of the grant is to help the chamber develop a more sophisticated telecommunication infrastructure and to better communicate with its members," says Emanuel Gardner, vice president and general manager of AT&T's South Texas division. Gardner, who presented the award at the reception, said that the grant would help develop the chamber's economic development and community outreach programs.

TAAACC chairman Devoyd Jennings is excited about the grant and is already planning for its immediate use.

"There is a pressing need for African American chambers of commerce to better communicate among ourselves," says

locations. Jennings eventually expects all member chambers to be on-line.

One of the goals of the TAAACC is to advance the interests of its constituency by emphasizing legislative priorities. During the 75th legislative session, the TAAACC has committed to the following objectives:

- Advocating legislation by enlisting legislators to sponsor and endorse legislation on issue germane to TAAACC member interests.
- Supporting legislation, upon request, by canvassing legislators and/or testifying before legislative committees on issues pertinent to TAAACC members.
- Endorsing legislation through telephone banks, internet, and letter writing campaigns.
- Studying legislation and examining its impact on TAAACC constituency.

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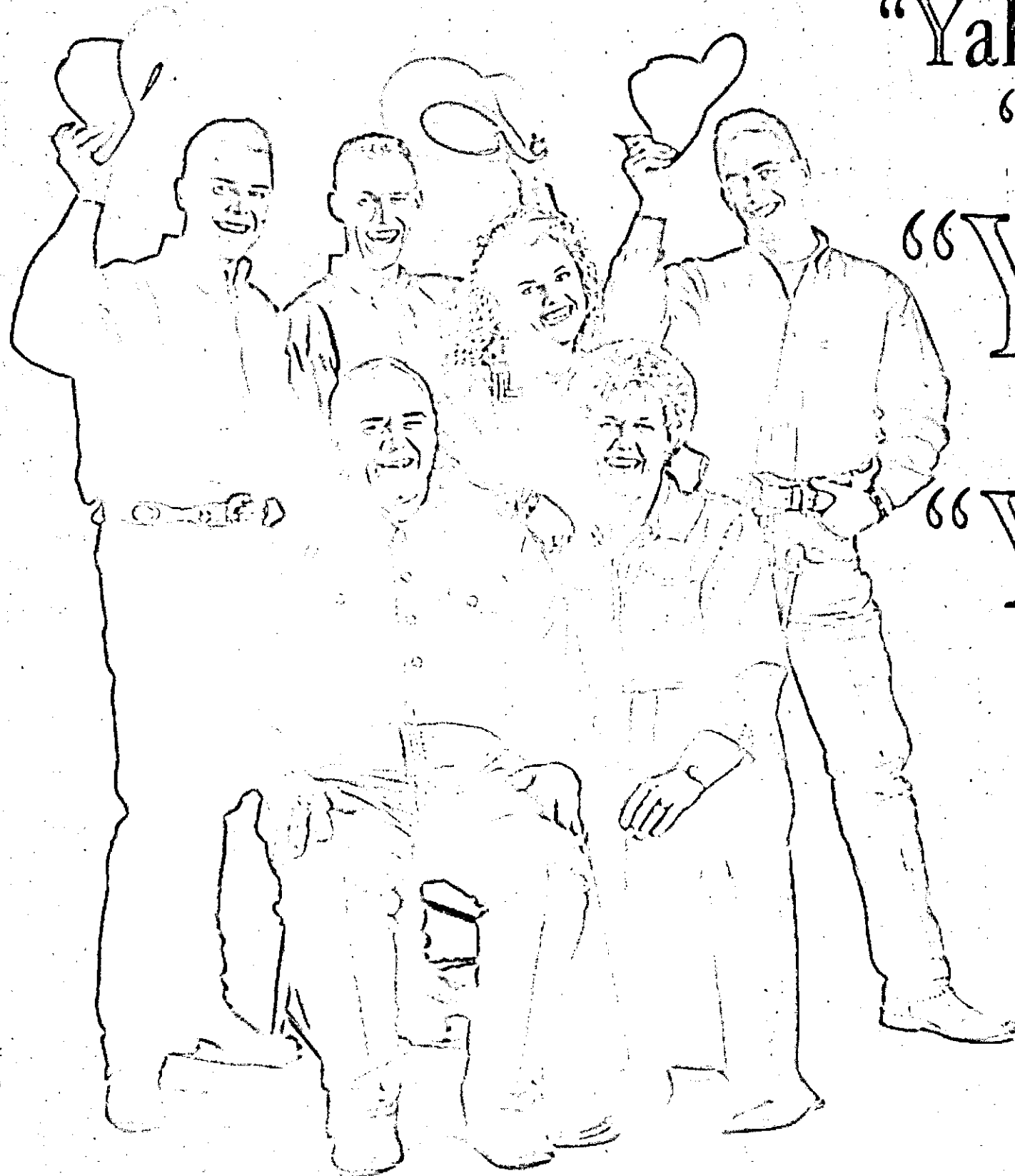
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AND STILL COUNTING



Angela Robinson

As you may already know, cyberspace is rapidly becoming the hottest marketing and advertising media for large and small businesses alike with the most often asked question by small businesses being, "How can my business make money on the internet?"

With the wide and diverse array of audiences continuing to grow in cyberspace, virtually any business has a shot at homing in on a potential customer on the internet. If you are out there exploring the many services available as a novice or advanced user, I am sure you can attest to the saying that there are literally hundreds of thousands of businesses from the legitimate to the not so legitimate cashing in on the millions of potential customers who sign on daily. People are selling cars, books, lingerie, caskets, cookies, clothes, recipes, weight loss programs, electronics, gift certificates, cleaning product, groceries, funeral services, and opportunities just to name a few. As you can see, there are a variety of products and services just in this minute listing alone. But let's say that you are still unsure about how it would be possible to make money on the internet. These next few guidelines should clear up some of the uncertainty.

The first thing you want to do is ask yourself what service or product do I have to offer a potential customer?

- Is it something that will appeal to the masses across the country or even across the world?
- Can my product be shipped to my customer?
- Do I have a flexible payment collection system set up (i.e., c.o.d., credit card and so on)?
- Do I have a plan to handle returned or damaged merchandise and a refund guideline in place?
- If I am a service business and my customers are not local, am I in the position to go out to my customer, or do I have a satellite personnel system in place to meet my customer's needs?
- And lastly, but certainly not least, will I be able to satisfy my customer's demand for my products or services in a timely manner?

If you can answer yes to all these questions, it is probably a given that your business could do business on the internet. If you are selling professional services that require some type of special licensing, such as legal counseling or medical related services, I strongly suggest that you make sure your business is in compliance with all federal rules and regulations.

Now that we have determined that

Making money on the Internet

your business could possibly cash in on all the cybercash that is floating around on the internet, your next question would probably be "How do I position my business in this techno-marketplace?"

The most common way to do business on the internet is to hook up to the World Wide Web. This method can be somewhat costly as you will need to pay someone to design your web pages and then pay an internet service provider a monthly fee to advertise your page. And of course there is a matter of maintaining the page with updated information (unless you are one of the fortunate ones who have zeroed in on that particular technical expertise).

Another method is through Global Network Navigator. This is a service which is now owned and offered by America Online (AOL) that offers commercial advertising space to businesses for a fee. Your listing would be placed under an appropriate category that best describes your product much like the classifieds in a newspaper. Once signed onto this particular site, the interested consumer would then be allowed to browse and buy goods and services from

The most common way to do business on the internet is to hook up to the World Wide Web.

you and other vendors who contract with GNN while enjoying the services such as linking up to other sites, keeping up-to-date with news about the internet as well as accessing financial and travel tips. To reach GNN, direct your web browser to: <http://gnn.com>.

Another similar provider is Downtown Anywhere, which is a mega shopping mall on the internet. It is a virtual city with a real economy that is accessible to anyone on the internet. From there, browsers will find a library, newsstand, museums, schools, sports arenas, financial districts, post office, and Main Street-the business and shopping district. One of Downtown Anywhere's main attractions is its virtual shopping cart where you can move through one shop after another marking items you want to purchase and when you are finished, the system collects your items, tallies the price tags and charges your account. To locate Downtown Anywhere, point your browser to: <http://www.awa.com>.

As you can see, the opportunities are available to your business for a price and the effort. However, be aware of this caveat: No matter how you decide to promote your business's products or services through the internet, experts warn that establishing a business presence online is different from simply providing a toll-free phone service. Online customers expect access to more information than they could receive by placing a phone order. They are also used to instant gratification and become frustrated when something they order takes weeks to arrive, which goes back to being able to offer quick and reliable service to your customers.

Making a marketing or delivery mistake can tend to be more costly with an internet customer than a phone order customer. When internet users have a bad experience with internet purchasing, they tend to share it online, covering a potential viewing audience of thousands as opposed to neighbors and friends.

All in all, it's easy to see why so many people are excited about the commercial prospects of the internet and are willing to do the necessary hard work to ensure that their risk of a successful presence is magnified. The internet, especially the web, represents a new medium for reaching customers and clients that's dynamic, colorful and interactive.

MON

Angela Robinson is owner/operator of Dal-Tex Computer Learning Center for Children & Adults. The center is located at 8928 Lake June Rd. in Dallas. For more information, call (214) 398-4749.



Edward Harris

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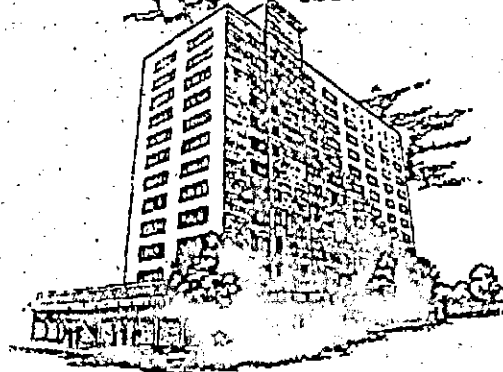
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Curtis Yates

Bond Money! Program 51

For many, the challenge is still at hand, simply trying to purchase your first home. Of course we all know that every opportunity may not be the right opportunity for everybody. A new opportunity for acquiring bond money mortgage financing at a below market rate of 6.75 percent is now at hand. The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs will make available \$84,821,459 for eligible first time home-buyers through First Time Home-Buyer Bond Program 51.

Offering such a below market rate will help very low to moderate income families in the state of Texas qualify for home ownership by creating lower monthly mortgage payments. Let's look at, say, a family of four that failed to qualify for a standard traditional FHA loan because of high front and back ratios. (See the table in fig. 1.)

Also be aware that the application fee when applying for the bond money via Program 51 is \$225, an application fee typically costs right at \$65. Here is a list of guidelines to qualify:

- A qualified borrower must be a first time home-buyer who has not owned or had an interest in a principal resi-

dence in the past three years. Exceptions to this rule are applicable when a home is purchased in a targeted area. Very low income families (earning 50 percent area median family income or less) are also exempt if previous ownership interest in a principal residence was secured through a Contract for Deed.

- A qualified borrowers' gross annual income may not exceed the area median family income as listed in the Maximum Income Limit table. Income levels vary regionally across the State of Texas.

- A qualified borrower must have sufficient funds (for closing costs and down payment) and the financial stability to qualify for a mortgage loan.

- The purchase price of the home must be within maximum purchase price limits (see fig. 2).

The maximum purchase price limits for the first seven counties listed are \$122,684 for new construction and \$114,416 for existing homes. The maximum price limits for Tarrant County on new construction are \$140,536 for new construction and \$95,234 for existing homes. Forty percent of Bond Program 51 funds are reserved for one year to assist Texas families earning 80 percent AMFI or less in purchasing their first home.

Moreover, qualified borrowers who earn 80 percent AMFI (adjusted per family size) are on the Down Payment Assistance Program. This program can be used in conjunction with the "Bond Program 51". The Down Payment Assistance Program assists very low income Texas fam-

Fig. 1

Normal FHA Market Financing
Dallas County
Family size = 4
Family Income = 40,000/yr
Sales Price: \$65,000
Down Pymt: \$1,500
Loan Amt = \$63,500 @ 8percent
P&I = \$465.94
T&I = \$209.45
Est. House Pymt. = \$675.39

FHA Bond Financing
Dallas County
Family size = 4
Family Income = 40,000/yr
Sales Price: \$65,000
Down Pymt: \$1,500
Loan Amt = \$63,500 @ 6.75 percent
P&I = \$411.86
T&I = \$209.45
Est. House Pymt. = \$621.31

(Difference of \$54.08 could be the make/break ratios qualifying point.)

Fig. 2

Maximum Income Limit Table

County	80 percent AMFI*	For 1or2 Persons	For 3 or More Persons
Dalla	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Collin	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Denton	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Ellis	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Hunt	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Kaufman	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Rockwall	\$38,640	\$48,300	\$55,545
Tarrant	\$38,000	\$47,500	\$54,625

*Area Medium Family Income

ilies that earn 80 percent of AMFI or less with purchasing their home. Eligible borrowers with limited available funds that qualify for a mortgage loan through the "Bond Program 51" can apply for DPAP assistance.

MON

Curtis Yates is the owner/operator of REAL ESTATE STATUS QUO; 8131 LBJ Fwy; Ste. 800; Dallas, Tx 75251. E-mail cya755@airmail.net. Website: <http://www.flash.net/~statusqu>

a referral call to a local H.O.W. agency. Callers may call back if they require additional information or referrals. Callers with limited or no English skills will be assisted in identifying appropriate resources.

Training Manual: H.O.W. training inserts are being prepared to supplement the Housing Counseling Manual, which was developed by the National Foundation for Consumer Credit as part of the training that counselors in HUD-approved housing counseling agencies receive. These inserts can stand alone and they will help H.O.W. partners and housing service providers tailor counseling programs to the needs of women. Agencies interested in the H.O.W. inserts or the *Housing Counseling Manual* should contact HCC at 1-800-217-6970.

MON

This information made available courtesy of The Housing Counseling Clearinghouse. They can be reached at P.O. Box 9057, Gaithersburg, MD 20898-9998; 800-217-6970; Fax 301-251-5767

Single women and home ownership opportunities

Despite continuing growth in home ownership rates nationwide, single women or single women with families are significantly less likely to own their homes. Although nearly two-thirds of all U.S. households are homeowners, only 50 percent of single women who head households own their own homes. The home ownership rate for women with families is even lower at 45 percent.

H.O.W.

Home ownership Opportunities for Women (H.O.W.) is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and 32 national organizations. The H.O.W. initiative provides customized assistance and advice to women interested in buying their own homes. The H.O.W. partners play a critical role in helping their local affiliates provide advice and encouragement to women who wish to achieve home ownership.

The Housing Counseling Clearinghouse (HCC) works with the H.O.W. partners to address the needs of women seeking home ownership, providing them with encouragement, information, and referral services. In addition, HCC provides program material and other useful resources to agencies currently providing or seeking to establish home ownership outreach programs.

Services provided

HCC will assist in expanding this partnership by offering the following services:

Toll free referral: A dedicated toll free line, 1-888-HOME 4 US, provides callers with referrals to local agencies that offer pre-purchase counseling. Upon reaching HCC, callers speak with a staff member who is familiar with the H.O.W. initiative and makes

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INVITATION FOR BIDS

Painting of Building Exteriors of Barbara Jordan
The Housing Authority of the City of Dallas, Texas (DHA) will receive bids for the Painting of Building Exteriors of Barbara Jordan, Tex 9-25 until 10:00 A.M. on Monday, March 3, 1997 at 3939 N. Hampton Road, Suite 350, Dallas, Texas 75212, at which time and place of bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Removal and the Replacement of The Perimeter Wood Fence at Audella Manor
The Housing Authority of the City of Dallas, Texas (DHA) will receive bids for the Removal and Replacement of The Perimeter Wood Fence at Audella Manor until 11:00 A.M. on Monday, March 3, 1997 at 3939 N. Hampton Road, Suite 350, Dallas, Texas 75212, at which time and place of bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Painting of Building Exteriors at Pebbles Apartments
The Housing Authority of the City of Dallas, Texas (DHA) will receive bids for the Painting of Building Exteriors at Pebbles Apartments, Tex 9-25 until 2:00 P.M. on Monday, March 3, 1997 at 3939 N. Hampton Road, Suite 350, Dallas, Texas 75212, at which time and place of bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Bid Documents, Including Plans and Specifications, may be acquired at DHA's Central Office, 3939 N. Hampton Road, Suite 350, Dallas, Texas 75212.

A \$25.00 non-refundable fee is required to obtain plans and specifications.

THE DHA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS OR TO WAIVE ANY INFORMALITIES IN THE BIDDING.



The Housing Authority of the City of Dallas, Texas will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or age.



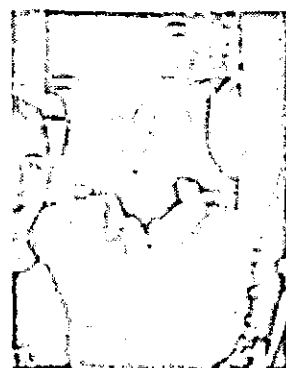


Fairy Street
Mama

What does Easter mean to you?

Each year during this time we memorialize the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is a time of the year that our churches are usually packed with the unswerving Christians and those that have for some reason or another slacked from the teachings of Christ and the real importance

and meaning of Easter. In my search of families that could explain one of the real meanings of Easter, I found one family that had plenty to say.



This is Tommy Smith what Tommy Smith, father of two, had to say about Easter and what it means to him.

TOMMY: Easter means a lot to me because Christ died and rose during that time, according to our Bible...I get a chance to teach the kids about Christ during Easter....

A long time ago, I didn't know what Easter

really meant...I used to go to church and I didn't really understand...At that time in my life, Easter seemed more like a time for dressing up in new clothes...but as I have grown older I now understand that Easter means much more than dressing up in new clothes....Being a single parent makes me understand what I need to do to ensure that my kids understand the sacrifice of Christ and the reason behind celebrating Easter and how we as a family must use that time of the year to come closer to each other and to Christ."

Mr. Smith's children, Toi, 7, and Shaffah, 6, and his mother, Betty, have their own opinions about what Easter



Betty Smith and grandchildren, Toi (left) and Shaffah.

means to them.

TOI: I like Easter because it means that Christ has risen and he died for our sins...I also like Easter because I get to say a speech at church during a program with other kids...I also like to practice with other kids and we sing in the choir...We sing about Jesus, who is the son of God...I like to learn about Jesus because he died on the cross and then rose again."

SHAFFAH: "I like to go to church on Easter and I like to go Easter egg hunting too!...I like to sing about Jesus."

BETTY: "Easter means to me the love of Christ who I know died on Calvary and shed blood for our sins.The beauty of it is, he arose on the third day....Also that there will be a return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ because He said so in the Holy Scripture, His blessed word."

We must remember that Christ is always where we want him to be. His death made it possible for us to have eternal life through him. We should remember to include Christ in our lives and make sure that our children understand that Christ should be a part of their lives even while they

are away from our care. Easter is one of the most important celebrated days of the year but we must also remember that "Clothes do not make the Man," God does.

MON

Fairy Street Mama can be seen on cable Channel 23b on Tuesday at 4 p.m., Thursday at 5 p.m. and Saturday at 10 p.m. Also, viewers can see her live or call every 4th Wednesday from 8-9 p.m. For more information, call (214) 561-2002.

The Solution

By Keledra Williams

Everyone is unique in their own special way. It may be the way they walk or the little things they say. Everyone's uniqueness is labeled by their behavior. The only person who truly knows them is our Lord and Savior.



There are so many critics and judges on the earth. But only one person's judgment has great worth. The human society has wasted valuable time putting down each other. When God said regardless of our mistakes we should love our brother.

God put everyone on this earth with a special goal to reach. This is something the society doesn't teach.

When everyone on earth knows that they have a purpose, and a reason for being here, All drugs, crimes, and suicides will not be a fear.

So if the world truly wants world peace, All judgment, hatred and prejudices must cease.

This will be accomplished when it is instilled in everyone that they're worth more than gold. But until then, this world will continue to be cold.

MON

Keledra Williams is a ninth grader at Wharton High School in Wharton, Texas.

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Ron Shaw

Deja Vu (I've been here before)

1 Peter 1: 6,7

I had the opportunity recently to talk with a lady who had been through the tough times of the 40's. As we talked about this present generation, the subject of today's problems came up. I was expecting her to talk about how much different things are now than when she was growing up. However, much to my surprise she was not startled at all. She looked at me and said, "Oh I been here before" meaning she had faced tough times before. In fact, she said "you young folks can't take nothin'."

As I left her, I began to reflect on our conversation. I thought about all the people I've talked with recently who were complaining about their present condition. It was as if they had never seen difficult days before. Have you ever won-

Have you ever wondered why it seems like you keep going through the same test or trouble in your life?

dered why it seems like you keep going through the same test or trouble in your life? Well, there are two spins on this thing I want to give.

First, if you've been through trouble before, you should be better at handling it the next time. If you've trusted God before and He brought you out, you should be praising Him for deliverance this time. Sometimes I like to just stand right up in the face of trouble and say to the devil, "Deja vu, I've been here before and know what the end of this thing will be." I know He's delivered me before and will do it again. So for those of you who have been through tough times before, be encouraged. Just remember there's nothing new under the sun. You've seen it before. As some of our kids remind us, "been there, done that." Don't come apart

like a cheap watch just because you're facing some tests and trials. Chill out! The psalmist said "the righteous have never been forsaken" (37:25).

Secondly, for some of you, you will keep going through the same trouble and test until you pass it. It's like a test in school that you've taken before. You should know the answers by now. The Bible says the devil doesn't have anything new to use on us, only that which is common to man.

Our text says the reason for some tests is to purify our faith. As gold is purified and steel is tempered, so it is with our faith. Our tests push us and try us and through the resistance to our faith it is developed. Israel was tested several times to perfect them. Jesus learned obedience through the things he suffered. This year, determine to pass the tests you've faced before so you can move on to higher things. Don't fall for the same old stuff.

Some people respond to problems and challenges the same way year in and year out and end up in the same condition year in and year out. That's okay if every time you see the same question you put down the right answer. It's okay to do the same thing if what you're doing is the right thing. However, in my experience, that is not the case. Your faith will be tested this year. Some of you will face some of the same challenges you faced last year.

So the next time they come around just say, "Deja vu, I been here before." Then determine to respond God's way and pass on through so you can grow and go to the next level in your life. Have you been in the fire before? How did you come out? Was it deja vu? Have you had job challenges before? What about relationship challenges? Been there done that? Will you come through as gold, tried in the fire?

MON

Ron Shaw is the pastor of LightChurch and can be reached at (214) 320-5744.

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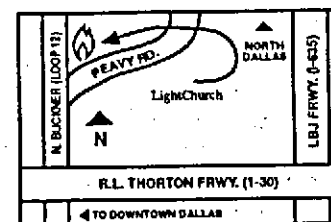
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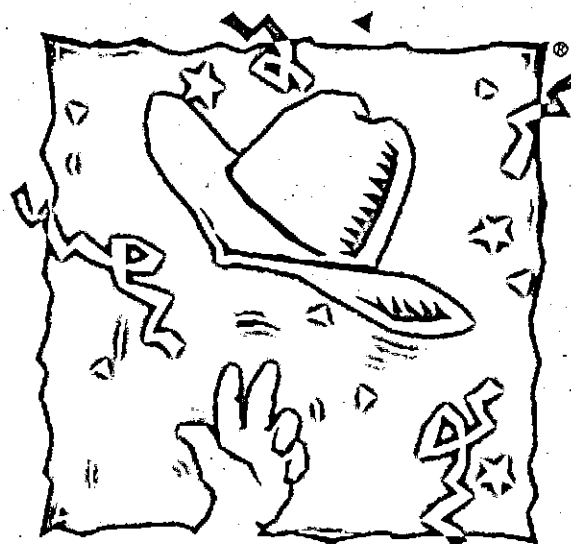
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4. Secondary Reading (7-12)
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6. Life/Earth Science (7-8)
24 semester hours in life/earth science. Life science may include biology, zoology, and botany. Earth science must include geology/earth science and may include work in oceanography, meteorology or astronomy. Hours must include, but are not limited to, six semester hours in each area (i.e., life or earth science) with a minimum of six hours of upper division courses.

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DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

1. Sealed bids addressed to the Board of Education of the Dallas Independent School District, Dallas County, Texas, for the RENOVATIONS of David W. Carter High School and Lincoln High School located in Dallas, Texas for the Dallas Independent School District, hereinafter called "District" in accordance with plans, specifications and Contract Documents adopted by the District, prepared by Sonny-Nichole Architecture will be received in the Purchasing Office, 3700 San Jacinto, Dallas, Texas until 2:00 PM, April 1, 1997. At that time, the bids will be publicly opened and read aloud and tabulation will be made to present to the Board of Education at the next regular meeting for consideration in awarding the Contract. Any bid received after the closing time will be returned unopened.

2. There will be a Pre-Bid Conference on Wednesday, March 19, 1997 at 2:30 PM at David W. Carter High School, 1819 W. Wheatland Rd., Dallas, Texas 75232, for the purpose of answering questions and walking the site. Bidders are invited and urged to be present.

3. The Contractor shall identify their bid on the outside of the envelope by writing the name of the project on which they are bidding. The name of the project is "Renovations to Carter/Lincoln."

4. Plans and specifications may be examined in the office of Sonny-Nichole Architecture, 1215 Rita Lane, Duncanville, TX 75116 and are on file at:

McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
F.W. Dodge Division
1341 W. Mockingbird Lane
Suite 1101-E
Dallas, Texas 75247-4943
(214) 630-6111
Attn: Nancy Ebarb

F.W. Dodge Plan Room - Fort Worth
1300 Summit Ave., Suite 740
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
(817) 338-4788
Attn: Jennifer Gray

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
4622 Maple Avenue, Suite 207
Dallas, Texas 75219
(214) 521-6007
Attn: Patricia Hernandez

American Indian Center
2219 West Euless Blvd.
Euless, Texas 76040
(817) 355-5145
(817) 545-5838 FAX
Attn: Mary Helen Deer-Smith

Texas Contractor Plan Room
2510 National Drive
Garland, Texas 75041
(214) 271-2693
Attn: Linda Gant

Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce
2838 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Dallas, Texas 75215
(214) 421-5200
Attn: Carmen Humble

AGC/CMD Dallas Plan Room
11111 Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, Texas 75229
(214) 484-2030
Attn: Jayme Tomlinson

ABC/Americas Company
4320 N. Beltline Rd., Ste. A102
Irving, Texas 75038
(214) 256-2219
Attn: Terry McAdams

Pl. Worth Metropolitan Black
Chamber of Commerce
3607 E. Rosedale
Pl. Worth, Texas 76105
(817) 531-8510
(817) 534-9274 FAX
Attn: Bernadine Thomas

Association of Gen. Contractors
Plan Room
417 Fulton Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76104
(817) 332-9265
Attn: Jackie Lazo

Dallas/Ft. Worth Minority Business
Development Center
2720 Stemmons Freeway
1000 Stemmons Tower South
Dallas, Texas 75207-2212
(214) 630-0747
Attn: Bill Hunter

5. Plans and specifications may be examined and obtained from Arlington Blue-Line, 605A East Abrams, Arlington, TX 76010 (817) 460-1664, upon deposit of a separate refundable check (payable to Sonny-Nichole Architecture) in the amount of \$100.00 per set. Checks will be returned upon delivery of the plans in good condition to the Architect within fourteen (14) days after bid opening.

6. A cashier's check payable to the Dallas Independent School District, in the amount of not less than five percent (5%) of the bid submitted must accompany the bid, or an acceptable Bid Bond in the same amount.

7. It is the goal of the District that at least 30% of the work performed under the Contract will be done by minority or woman owned business enterprises.

8. The District reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and to waive any formalities.

9. The District is committed to ideals of equal opportunity in all its business endeavors.

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

1. Sealed bids addressed to the Board of Education of the Dallas Independent School District, Dallas County, Texas, for the RENOVATIONS of Johnston Elementary School located in Dallas, Texas for the Dallas Independent School District, hereinafter called "District" in accordance with plans, specifications and Contract Documents adopted by the District, prepared by E. Evans Associates will be received in the Purchasing Office, 3700 San Jacinto, Dallas, Texas until 2:00 PM, March 18, 1997. At that time, the bids will be publicly opened and read aloud and tabulation will be made to present to the Board of Education at the next regular meeting for consideration in awarding the Contract. Any bid received after the closing time will be returned unopened.

2. There will be a Pre-Bid Conference on Monday, March 10, 1997 at 2:00 PM at Albert Sidney Johnson Elementary School, 2020 Mouser St., Dallas, Texas 75203, for the purpose of answering questions and walking the site. Bidders are invited and urged to be present.

3. The Contractor shall identify their bid on the outside of the envelope by writing the name of the project on which they are bidding. The name of the project is "Renovations to Johnston Elementary School."

4. Plans and specifications may be examined in the office of E. Evans Associates, 11551 Forest Central Drive Suite 226 Dallas, Texas 75243 (214) 340-4440 and are on file at:

McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
F.W. Dodge Division
1341 W. Mockingbird Lane
Suite 1101-E
Dallas, Texas 75247-4943
(214) 630-6111
Attn: Nancy Ebarb

F.W. Dodge Plan Room - Fort Worth
1300 Summit Ave., Suite 740
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
(817) 338-4788
Attn: Jennifer Gray

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
4622 Maple Avenue, Suite 207
Dallas, Texas 75219
(214) 521-6007
Attn: Patricia Hernandez

American Indian Center
2219 West Euless Blvd.
Euless, Texas 76040
(817) 355-5145
(817) 545-5838 FAX
Attn: Mary Helen Deer-Smith

Texas Contractor Plan Room
2510 National Drive
Garland, Texas 75041
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Attn: Linda Gant

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Attn: Carmen Humble

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11111 Stemmons Freeway
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(214) 484-2030
Attn: Jayme Tomlinson

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4320 N. Beltline Rd., Ste. A102
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Attn: Terry McAdams

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(817) 534-9274 FAX
Attn: Bernadine Thomas

Association of Gen. Contractors
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417 Fulton Street
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(817) 332-9265
Attn: Jackie Lazo

Dallas/Ft. Worth Minority Business
Development Center
2720 Stemmons Freeway
1000 Stemmons Tower South
Dallas, Texas 75207-2212
(214) 630-0747
Attn: Bill Hunter

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6. A cashier's check payable to the Dallas Independent School District, in the amount of not less than five percent (5%) of the bid submitted must accompany the bid, or an acceptable Bid Bond in the same amount.

7. It is the goal of the District that at least 30% of the work performed under the Contract will be done by minority or woman owned business enterprises.

8. The District reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and to waive any formalities.

9. The District is committed to ideals of equal opportunity in all its business endeavors.

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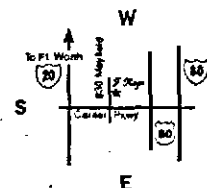
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Take emergency and non-emergency calls for fire and police services. Must be 21 years of age and have basic 40 hours TLETS operator's certificate. \$10.55 - 12.00/hr. starting range.

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From your twirling feet

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