

The "Good News" Newspaper • Serving North Florida & Central Florida

Christian Reader

Vol. 14 No. 9

SEPTEMBER 2006

FREE MONTHLY



The 2006 Vote

*We Know Even More
The Importance Of
Good Leadership*

Serving North & Central Florida

Christian Reader

The "Good-News" Newspaper

The *Christian Reader* is a monthly publication that seeks to strengthen our community through the knowledge of God our Creator, Christ our Redeemer, and The Holy Spirit our Guide.

It is our goal never to criticize, condemn, or complain, but instead to inspire, encourage, and enhance the lives of all people through Christian principles, teachings, examples, and knowledge.

Our purpose is to renew the total person - mind, body, and soul, that he/she may be well equipped to experience without hindrance the "life more abundantly" that Jesus promised to all that seek His face and do His will.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Are You A Democrat or Republican? By Rev. Anthony Graham	Page 3
2006 Caribbean Gospel Awards By Lisa Canton	Page 5
Why Should We Vote? By Attorney Joseph Morrell	Page 7
Voting Timeline	Page 8
Film and Politics Mix By Faith Maginley	Page 9
Stop Judging By Mere Appearances By Rev. Dr. Carlton D. Jones	Page 15
The 2006 Vote	Page 17
The Rib & Roast of Lloyd "Tank" Johnson	Page 19
H.O.P.E. Youth Summer Work Program	Page 20
Simpson Harold Financial Dedicates Business	Page 23
Calling All DIVAS	Page 24
Dead Flies In The Church By Aundra Bryant	Page 29
God's Plan For Me By Pastor Leon Bing	Page 30
Not Long Ago... By Faith Maginley	Page 32
Liberia Avenue Community Project	Page 33
Editorial By Darryl A. Barrs, Sr. Publisher / Managing Editor	Page 37
Fine-Tune Your Crystal Ball By Lestine Ford Allstate Insurance	Page 38
Katrina Lessons - One Year Later By Earl Ofari Hutchinson	Page 35

THE CHRISTIAN READER

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ARE YOU A DEMOCRAT OR A REPUBLICAN?

By Reverend Anthony M. Graham
Emmanuel Church of the Living God
Daytona Beach, Florida

Within the political sector of our country, two dominant parties seem to control every elected office on a national, state, and local level – Democrats and Republicans. Researchers determine that Democratic voters are predominately lower to middle income families, young people with liberal views, minorities, and women. They list Republican voters as predominately middle to upper income families, older people with conservative views, religious people, and white men.

Particularly during election time, it is amazing to see how Christian voters on both sides try to demonize the other party. I have heard statements like, "How could you be a Christian and vote Democratic?" and "How could you vote for Republicans who do not care about minorities or the poor?" Both questions are valid, but the ultimate question comes down to this; as a Christian, should I be proud to be a Democrat or a Republican? Let us take a deep look into both parties.

The Republican Party seems to be the party of the Businessman. When you listen to conservative radio personalities like Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity, you get a sense that the Republican Party has a 'pull yourself up by your own bootstraps' viewpoint. They lecture that anyone who applies himself or herself will live the American dream.

Unfortunately, the party of the elephant has a history of cutting social programs that were created to help those who are less fortunate. These programs were set in place to help people who fall on hard times and may need a hand up. There is a hidden, underling attitude that seems to come out of the Republican camp which states, "The government should not take my tax dollars from me to give it away to people who do not want to work." If you really listen closely, you will hear this treacherous rhetoric that is utterly despicable.

As Christians, we should know that one of the main priorities of Jesus was to help and feed those who were in need. In Matthew Chapter 6, the disciples seem to portray this hidden philosophy of the Republican Party; "*Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy themselves some food.*" Jesus responses with the correct attitude that we as Christians should embrace; "*You feed them.*" We must have compassion on those that are in need. Of course, there are going to be some lazy people who are going to try to abuse the system. These individuals should be caught and punished, but those who are really in need should not have to pay for the sins of others.

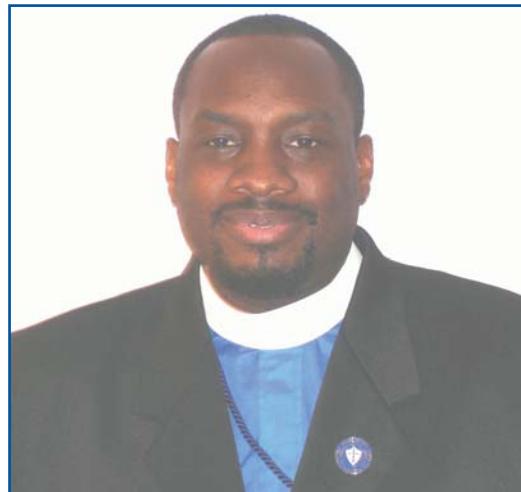
We should have no problem with the Republican view of less government and less taxes, but we should be against the cutting of necessary social and economic programs for people in need to make up the difference. The cutting of vital programs to pay for tax breaks is immoral and appalling and CHRISTIAN REPUBLICANS should stand up and denounce this practice! Christians who are Republicans need to cry out to God to forgive the sins of their party! The so-called Evangelical, Compassionate, Conservative Party needs to stand up and really exemplify the true character of Jesus...Care About and Feed the Poor! Do not just push them aside and walk over them. If you want to be a proud Christian Republican, you need to pray that the evil practices of the party be changed!

Before Christian Democrats shout "Amen" and "Hallelujah", let us inspect and analyze the party with the donkey logo. The Democratic Party seems to be the party of the Workingman. When you listen to progressive radio personalities like Ed Schultz and Stephanie Miller, you get a sense that the Democratic Party favors social action programs that help the poor and middle class.

Unfortunately, the party of the donkey, that is always willing to speak up for the poor and others who are in need, has a history of embracing immoral and appalling practices also. There is a minor and a major offense that Democrats indulge in that needs to be corrected.

The minor offense is the deliberate use of misleading information or half-truths. The famous half-truth that they use during election time is the old "Republicans only care about tax breaks for the rich". Democrats use this scare tactic to cause a class war between rich and lower to middle-income people just to obtain votes. This half-truth needs to be exposed.

Let us be real and extremely frank...rich people do not pay the same percentage of taxes like lower or middle-income people. Rich people operate under this



Reverend Anthony M. Graham

principle; "control everything and own nothing." Rich people hire high-powered CPAs who will use any and every tax loophole to benefit their wealthy clients. By the time they write off their car, their Rolex watch, the maid, the driver, their children, the cat, and the dog, they pay a small percentage of their yearly earnings in taxes. Lower and middle-income people earn money, pay taxes, and spend what is left. Rich people earn money, spend money, and pay taxes on the balance. Rich people put everything they can

under their corporation to avoid paying personal taxes.

The leaders of the Democratic Party try to paint a picture that only Republicans are benefiting from this tax system, but if you look closely, you will notice that they benefit from the tax loopholes also. Christian Democrats need to pray for their leaders to share the whole truth. Democratic leaders should not just create programs to give people a hand up, but they should also share the information they use so that others can benefit financially also. They claim that they empathize with the lower and middle-income individual, but the reality is they financially empathize with their Republican adversaries. Share the Whole Truth so lower and middle class people can get a tax break!

The major offense should be alarming to Democratic Christians. This party has a habit of accepting immoral lifestyles and beliefs just to bring about votes on their behalf. Abortions on demand...bring it on. Homosexual lifestyles...bring on the votes. People like Howard Dean as the spokesman...we accept! Is there a Democratic Christian out there that does not see a problem with aligning themselves with such a philosophy? Should we just look pass these major blemishes just to get economic gain? Let us look at a couple of these immoral practices.

Life during the Clinton administration was great. In New York City, on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Forty-Second Street, the National Debt Clock was turned off and we had a huge surplus. However, the same President Clinton disgraced his marriage vows and the Oval Office by receiving sexual favors from Monica Lewinsky, and Democratic Christians were quiet. Republicans went excessively far trying to impeach him, but the condemnation from Democratic Christians was slim.

This same great President Clinton, who I must confess I voted for in 1992 and 1996, vetoed a non-partisan bill that was going to ban partial-birth abortions on two separate occasions. He claimed that partial-birth abortions should be legal just in case the life of the mother is in jeopardy, and she should have the right to choose. However, we all know that abortion is rarely used for such a circumstance. Too many women are not making a choice between life or death, but are choosing between baby or career, baby from ex-boyfriend or new boyfriend, or baby from one night stand or husband. If you want to be a proud Democratic Christian, you need to pray that the evil practices of your party be changed!

As we look at both parties, we see that both have good qualities, but they also have some major flaws. Republican Christians, who want to be proud of their party, have not right to point a finger of condemnation at Democratic Christians, and the same rings true for Democratic Christians. We all need to accept the views and opinions of others because both sides have characteristics that are totally against the teachings of Jesus.

Reverend Anthony Graham is an ordained Reverend and the Church Administrator at Emmanuel Church of the Living God in Ormond Beach, FL under the tutelage of Bishop Dr. L. Delores Ward. www.amgministries.org



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THE 2006 CARIBBEAN GOSPEL MUSIC MARLIN AWARDS



**By Lisa Canton, President
Kulcha Gospel, International**

The 2006 Caribbean Gospel Music Marlin Awards was held on July 20 – July 23, 2006, located at Bahamas Faith Ministries International (BFMI), in the Diplomat Centre, where the **Honorable Dr. Myles Monroe** is the Senior Pastor, in Nassau, Bahamas. **Kevin "Minister K" Harris** of Harris Communications, founder and president of the Caribbean Gospel

Music Marlin Awards, presents this program every two years, and this year they celebrated their 10th anniversary. "This year's show was being videotaped as a "pilot" that is being taken to quite a few networks, so look for the Marlins to be on television in the near future and we want to move the show outside of the Bahamas!" stated Harris. "The Marlins," as it is affectionately known throughout the Caribbean gospel music industry is touted as the classiest awards show for Caribbean music, even beating out Caribbean secular award shows and being produced in such a high spirit of excellence that it has taken Caribbean gospel music to higher levels. It recognizes and rewards Caribbean gospel artists and music industry leaders specializing in presenting the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in a wide variety of praise and worship genres; from Rake & Scrape and Junkanoo, to Calypso, Soca, traditional gospel, Zouk (Creole/French), and Contemporary (Dancehall) Reggae. "The Marlins Award show is presented just like the Grammy Awards in Hollywood," claimed one patron.

The Marlins production staff moved as a tight group in sync with each other and it was amazing to see the precision. This was just the beginning of the high spirit of excellence witnessed in Nassau. As all of the artists, nominees, presenters, and media groups were trickling in on the island, the Marlins production team increased the precision.

They transported all industry leaders from their respective hotels to BFMI (where all scheduled events took place) via several vans. These van rides throughout the stay were amazing because you never knew who would be in the van when they came to pick you up. The conversations in these vans were awesome, watching and listening

as these leaders in Caribbean gospel music networked and linked up with each other was astounding within itself. As a reporter of the event, I had the honor of being chauffeured in vans with gospel artists such as **DJ Nicholas**, Jamaica (2 Marlins; *New Artist of the Year & Reggae Vocal Performance of the Year Duo/Group*), **Kerron Ennis**, Jamaica (2 Marlins; *Reggae Recording of the Year* and *Reggae Vocal Performance of the Year Duo/Group*), **Judah Praise**, St. Thomas, VI (1 Marlin; *Calypso/Soca Recording of the Year*), **Mark Mohr**, US, CEO for Lion of Zion Entertainment (1 Marlin; *Foreign Achievement Award* and a Marlin Global Gospel Music Summit Workshop Presenter), and Mark's wife **Avion Blackman**, Trinidad (3 Marlins; *Album of the Year*, *Contemporary Vocal Performance of the Year Female*, and *Packaging of the Year*), and there were quite a few nominees and performers in the vans also such as **The Lansiquot Sisters**, St. Croix, VI, who mesmerized the

crowds each night with their tight harmonizing skills; **The Heavenlies**, Belize, (1 Nomination; *Calypso/Soca Recording of the Year*), who were so kind to give up their seats on the van late one night and while riding in these vans they graciously sang Happy Birthday in a "cool island stylee" to **Mary Worthey** of Worthey Travel which was great fun. Also included in these wonderful van rides were several radio broadcasters, **DJ Evangel** and **DJ Psalms 150**, San Diego; and **DJ Linda "Chocolate" Bertheir**, St. Lucia.



Mark Mohr & Avion Blackman (Lion of Zion Entertainment) holding one of their many awards, Jah Pickney (left) and Mr. Lynx with Avalanche and a host of award winners (right)

Photo Courtesy of Kulcha Gospel

The Marlin Global Gospel Music Summit Workshop provided the following presenters who gave helpful information to their audience of Caribbean gospel artists, and those in ministries of promotions, management, booking agents, and radio broadcasting:



Stitchie (highest winner -4 Marlins) lighting up the stage with high jumps of praise & fast spitting lyrics on "Fast & Pray".

Photo Courtesy of Harris Communications/Marlin Awards 2006

Cleve "Stitchie" Lang, Gospel artist (4 Marlins; *Dee-Jay Vocal Performance of the Year Solo*, *Dancehall Recording of the Year*, *Music Video of the Year*, and *Producer of the Year*) Topic: "How to Balance Industry & Ministry"

Mark Mohr, CEO Lion of Zion Entertainment, (2006 Recipient of the Foreign Contribution Marlin Award) Topic: "How to Become a Successful Independent Artist"

Pastor Mark Bethel, Director of Fine Arts BFM, Topic: "How to Effectively Prepare for FullTime Ministry"

Kevin "Minister K" Harris, President of Marlin Awards, Topic: "How to Package your Album for Radio & Retail"

see MARLINS page 18



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Orange/Osceola, Kevin Beary, Orange County Sheriff, the
Orlando Professional Fire Fighters & the Orange County
Professional Fire Fighters**

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- ★ President of the Legal Aid Society, Vice President 2005 - 2006
- ★ Adjunct Professor, FAMU College of Law
- ★ Respected member of the Central Florida legal community serving on various boards
- ★ Community Volunteer: Boy Scouts, YMCA, UNCF, speaker at local schools
- ★ Devoted wife of 16 years with 3 children ages 15, 13 and 10
- ★ Daughter of a minister, choir member and long time member of Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church

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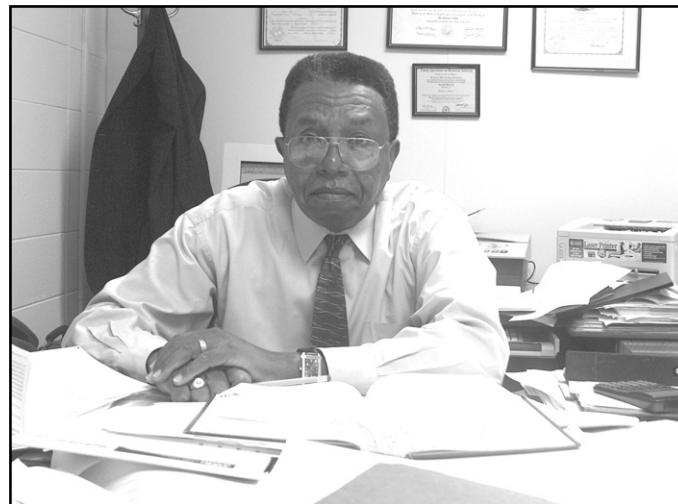
Whitehead
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Why Should We Vote

By Attorney Joseph Morrell
Orlando, Florida

This question has been asked many times by people who do not vote on election day. If you are an African American do you feel any guilt when you do not vote? Do you think of the African Americans and others who sacrificed their lives so that you can exercise your right to vote. Moreover, it should be apparent from a historical context, particularly in the South, that African Americans were denied the right to vote by the use of poll tax, literacy test, a rigid forms of gerrymandering, etc. These road blocks were constructed to disenfranchise and disempower the weaker they became and the stronger their enemies became.

The primary benefits of voting are that you help



JOSEPH MORRELL
Attorney and Counselor at Law

shape your destiny and the destiny of our nation. If you care about infant mortality, better education for yourself and your children, equal opportunity, criminal justice system and foreign policy then you should be very eager to cast your vote. Your vote determines who will be our elected officials, who ultimately establishes our laws and our social, eco-

nomic and political policies. When you do not vote you allow some elected officials to go unchallenged who are insensitive or even hostile to those issues that matter to African Americans.

The more you refuse or fail to vote the weaker the Republic becomes. So go vote to protect yourself and family and our Republic!

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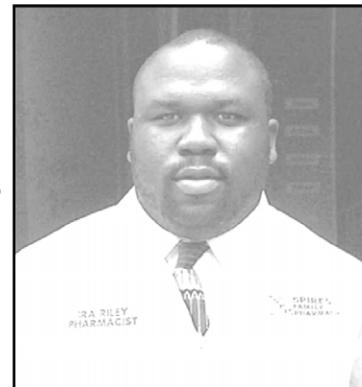
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Dr. Ira Riley, Jr. RPh

Voting Timeline

1776 White men with property can vote. Free black men can vote in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut.

1789 Establishment of the American democracy. White men with property can vote. Poor people cannot vote. Women, Native Americans, and enslaved African-Americans cannot vote.

1790 Between 1770 and 1790, each state handles its own naturalization laws. In 1790 the US passes its first law that grants citizenship to white men and some women. The right to vote is only for whites that have lived in the country for two years. In 1798 the law is changed so that white immigrants must live in the US for 14 years before they can become citizens. This changed to 5 years in 1902.

1820 The property laws are taken off the books and whites can vote even if they do not own property. But they must pay a poll tax or be able to read and, in some places, they must pass religious tests to vote.

1840 Poll taxes, literacy taxes, and religion tests are taken off the books. Only white men can vote.

1848 The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ends the Mexican-American War. The treaty guarantees citizenship to Mexicans living in the newly acquired territories of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Texas, and Nevada. Voting rights are denied — Mexican-Americans are not allowed to vote despite having US citizenship. Property laws, language and literacy requirements keep people from voting. “Night Riders” use intimidation and violence.

1860 Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts allow free black men to vote.

1866 The Civil War ends in 1865. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 grants citizenship to native-born Americans but excludes Native Americans.

1870 The 15th Amendment establishes the right of African-American men to vote. In the South especially, poll taxes, reading requirements, physical violence, property destruction, hiding the polls, and economic pressures keep most African-Americans from voting.

1882 The Chinese Exclusion Act bars people of Chinese ancestry from becoming citizens. They cannot vote.

1887 The Dawes Act gives citizenship only to Native Americans who give up their tribal affiliations.

1890 The Indian Naturalization Act grants citizenship to Native Americans in an application process similar to immigrant naturalization.

1901 Congress grants citizenship to Native Americans living in the Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

1920 White and African-American women gain the right to vote. (Prior to 1920, some parts of the country let some women vote. For what or for whom they could vote depended on where they were. Some could vote only in school elections.)

1921 The Sons of America organize to fight for equality and the rights of Mexican-American citizens, including the right to vote. It will be 1975 before the right to vote is available to all Mexican-Americans.

1922 In the case of *Takao v. United States* the US Supreme Court upholds the 1790 Naturalization Act that barred Asian Americans from becoming citizens. This enforces the policy of no voting rights for Asian immigrants.

1923 The court ruling in the case Bhagat Sing Thind v. The US rules that Asian Indians are eligible for citizenship. Technically it means that they can vote because they are now citizens. However, almost all immigrants who are people of color continue to be denied the right to vote.

1924 The service of Native Americans during World War I helps bring about the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act. The Act grants Native Americans citizenship, but many western states refuse to allow them to vote.

1943 Chinese Exclusion Act is repealed, making immigrants of Chinese ancestry eligible for citizenship.

1946 Filipinos are now allowed to become citizens.

1952 The McCarran-Walter Act repeals the racial restrictions of the 1790 Naturalization Law. First-generation Japanese can now become citizens.

1965 In direct response to the Civil Rights movement, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is enacted. It bans literacy tests and provides federal enforcement of black voter registration and voting rights.

1970 The 1970 Voting Rights Act bans literacy tests in 20 states including New York, Illinois, California, and Texas.

1971 The 26th Amendment gives full voting rights to 18-year-olds. This is a response to demonstrations demanding the vote for men under the age of 21 who were being drafted and sent to Vietnam.

1975 The Voting Rights Act is amended to include language assistance to minority voters. Language requirements have been used routinely to keep the vote from US-born citizens who speak other languages. It is now that the Voting Rights Act has some real impact and enforcement in the Southwest.

1990 The Americans with Disabilities Act requires access to the polls and to the ballot.



Film and Politics Mix on Eve of Early Voting

By Faith Maginley
Staff Writer

Congresswoman Corrine Brown, along with several members of the Orlando community, spent "An Afternoon at the Movies" on Sunday, August 20th. The event took place at the Regal Cinema Winter Park Village where Florida governor hopeful Jim Davis, Democrat, shared his platform, which includes a fully funded Florida Kidcare program and higher minimum wage.



Congresswoman Corrine Brown and Democrat Candidate for Governor Jim Davis entertain question from the press concerning the environment and campaign issues. On the left, Congresswoman Brown shares a moment with Jim Davis and good friend Florida House District 39 Candidate Geraldine F. Thompson.

"I am comfortable that he knows the issues. I feel he is somebody that we can hold accountable," said Brown, who has endorsed Davis. Several other candidates attended the screening including candidate Geraldine Thompson, who is running for District 39 State Representative.

The film, "An Inconvenient Truth," runs just over an hour and a half and features former Vice President Al Gore and his mission to alert the world of the consequences of global warming. Since the controversial presidential election of 2000, Gore has traveled the world with his giant-screened, multimedia presentation, illustrating the effects of dramatically high levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere. One scene in Gore's presentation shows the fate of once beautiful lakes that are little more than large puddles today due to global warming.

"I think we're spoiled. We should go back to walking, riding bicycles," said Vivian Carrington of Winter Park after viewing the film. She added that instituting these activities would bring people together and nurture families.

In regards to environmental concerns, Jim Davis spoke about his opposition to offshore oil drilling to preserve the Florida's beaches. Early voting has already begun for the primary races, and will end September 5.

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- Increase economic development and a better quality of life
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Reggie believes in the importance of family, spirituality and the chance to give back to the community. Presently, he serves as the Executive Director for The Project Reach Foundation and is responsible for the day to day operation of the organization. Reggie initiates collaborations with faith-based and community-based organizations to promote positive change for students and families. Reggie's professional focus has been in the social service arena for over 15 years. Reggie has proudly served in the United States Army for fourteen years and believes that, we must raise our standards, expectations and awareness of the issues facing our community in order to create the best district in Jacksonville to live in.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- United States Army Active/Reserves, Warrant Officer Candidate
- Leadership Jacksonville.
- Masters Applied Social Science (Public Administration), *Florida A & M University*
- Bachelor of Arts (Criminal Justice), *Edward Waters College*
- International Longshoremen Association, A.F.L.- C.I.O. LOCAL 1408.
- Duval County Executive Democratic Committee (DCDEC)

COMMITMENT

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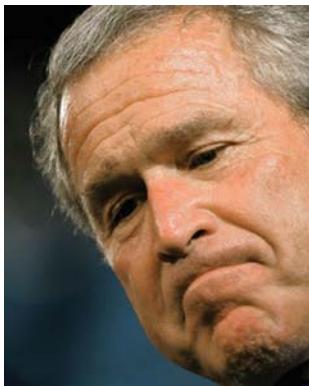
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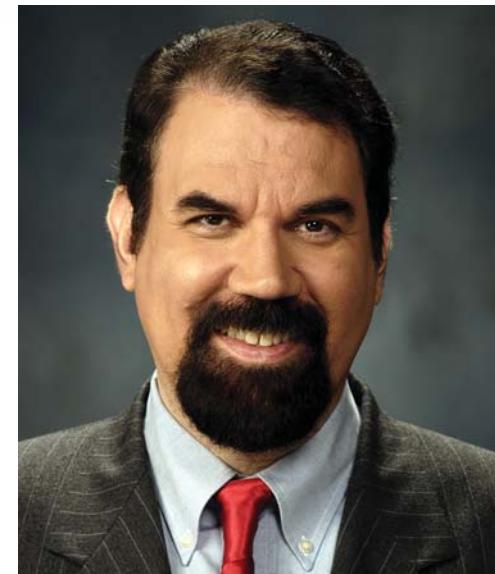
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February 2005. Alan Grayson appears before a Senate Policy Committee Investigating contractor fraud in Iraq.

2004 to 2006 Alan Grayson blows the whistle on war profiteers, in numerous lawsuits he files in Federal Courts. The Bush Administration seals every one of them, to avoid public scrutiny.

February 2004 Alan Grayson files suit against Republican Congressional candidate Mike Battles and his company Custer Battles, alleging millions of dollars in overbilling by sham companies, no-show jobs, and other war-profiteering and fraud, in security operations in Iraq.

October 2004 The Bush Administration tries to block the Custer Battles suit, claiming that the US False Claims Act of 1863 does not apply to the taxpayer-funded \$18.7 billion Iraqi Reconstruction effort.

February 2005 Alan Grayson testifies before the Senate Democratic Policy Committee, investigating billions of dollars of alleged war-profiteering and fraud. Mike Battles refuses to appear. Grayson quotes an FBI report stating that "Battles is very active in the Republican Party, and speaks to individuals he knows at the White House almost daily." The next day, Republican Senator Grassley calls for an investigation.

March 2005 Under intense media scrutiny, the Bush Administration reverses itself and concedes that the False Claims Act applies to Iraqi Reconstruction, but still refuses to join the case against Custer Battles. Alan Grayson proceeds on his own.

May 2005 Judge T. S. Ellis III of the U.S. District Court in Virginia agrees with Grayson, rules that the False Claims Act applies to Iraqi Reconstruction, and ridicules the Bush Administration's failure to participate.

March 2006 Following a month-long trial by Grayson, a federal jury returns a \$10 million verdict for the taxpayers against Custer Battles - the largest such verdict ever.

April 2006 Alan Grayson helps to write an amendment to the 1863 False Claims Act that compels the White House to report to the Senate every ninety days on the remaining suits against fraud in Iraq. The bill passes the Senate unanimously.

May 2006 Alan Grayson declares his candidacy for U.S. Congress in Florida's 8th District. Grayson promises to "fight corruption, waste, fraud and general Washington stupidity."

February 2006
Grayson appears in a 60 Minutes report on war profiteers in Iraq.

April 2006
In a page-one profile, The Wall Street Journal reports that "Alan Grayson is waging a one-man war against contractor fraud in Iraq."

April 2006
Grayson appears on CNN, reporting that "the Development Fund of Iraq has been looted by war profiteers and war whores."

July 2006
Grayson appears again on 60 Minutes.

"Sometimes all it takes is one person with guts to get the White House moving."

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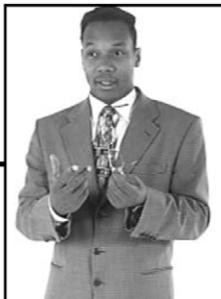
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ABOUT BRUCE ANTONE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRUCE ANTONE is a husband, father, member of Carter Tabernacle CME church and an Electrical Engineering graduate of Tuskegee University. Bruce has twenty-two years corporate and political experience and a proven record of passing legislation and securing funding for projects in our community. Bruce knows the political process and how to make things happen. Bruce has the experience to lead and he can get the job done for District six.

**BRUCE'S AGENDA FOR
DISTRICT 6**

HOUSING – Bruce will help single mothers and families buy their first home. He will work to increase funding for down-payment assistance and build more affordable and rental housing for families.

CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY – Bruce will increase police patrols in our neighborhoods to reduce crime and drugs. He will increase funding for after-school, weekend and summer job programs for youth to keep our kids safe from crime.

TRANSPORTATION – Bruce will work to increase the number of LYNX buses, the frequency of service and the number of covered bus stop shelters. He will improve transportation for Senior Citizens and the Disabled that need transportation to doctor's appointments. He will lead the fight to build a mass transit rail system for all of Orange County.

EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SENIORS – Bruce will lead the fight to provide more mentoring, sports, job and after-school programs for our youth and more services for Senior Citizens. He will also fight to improve our schools and graduation rates.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Bruce wants to provide more job training and apprenticeship programs for adults and ex-felons needing to earn a decent wage. He will also start a small business assistance program that will help small and minority businesses grow, secure loans and get their fair share of business contracts and opportunities.

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"STOP JUDGING BY MERE APPEARANCE"

By Rev. Dr. Carlton D. Jones
Jacksonville, Florida

Text: John 7:24 "Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."

This text was taken from Jesus teaching at the feast where He taught with such amazement that the crowd questioned how He (Jesus) knew so much about God. John 7:16-24, Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from Him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me? You are demon-possessed." The crowd answered "Who is trying to kill you?"

Jesus said to them, "I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision" (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs) you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."

We live in a world that is very righteous and judgmental. We're not happy unless we blame someone else for our misfortunes or failures. "Stop judging by mere appearances and make a right judgment." We have to be mindful that we are created in God's image and likeness, however we are not God and we do not have the power to judge. Judgment is God's. Adam and Eve's sins against God left us with a lot of baggage that we find it hard to unload even though we are saved, sanctified and holy. We still think that we have a God given right to judge. How can I judge you when I sin against God? Against God only do I, sin.

The world could be a better place if we would just take time to self-check, our emotions, before we blame someone for their actions. One action normally generates a reaction. I know that I am contradicting myself when I say that God knows that we have the ability to judge, however I believe that He sent His son Jesus to show us how to temper it with love, mercy and grace.

We must be mindful that with judgment comes a heavy burden because with the same measure that we judge someone, someone is going to judge us. God's judgment is swift and quick. New International Version; Hebrews 4:12-13: For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. King James Version; Hebrews 4:12-13, For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edge sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow



Reverend Carlton D. Jones

and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

A lot of people are asking the question if we are coming closer to judgment day, the day when Jesus will come back again. Some are preaching that we are living in the end times. Some people are afraid of all of the world events that are prophesied in the Bible. There is unrest in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean,

Europe, the Middle East, South America, and yes right here in the small towns and urban decay of America's cities and towns. There is so much death and destruction from wars, earthquakes, tsunamis, killer hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, famine, diseases and the lusts of the world that are only limited by our minds.

Many theologians are quick to say yes, that we are living in the end times, and that we need to repent of our sins and that if we do not we will be thrown into the lake of fire. God said, that we would not know the day, or the hour that Jesus will return. We should repent and ask God to forgive us of our sins, however we should live our lives everyday as though this will be our last day. We should try to capture the beauty that God gives us everyday, the beauty of the sky, or the natural beauty that surrounds us. Some would say that we should smell the roses.

We should love and forgive each other as though this is our last chance to do so. That is why I try to never go to bed without making up to my wife or children for anything that I have said or did. Life is short and we do not have to wait on the last days that are mentioned in the Bible, because our last day may be shorter than when Jesus comes back again. However, I can rest in assurance that I will live long after this earthly body is dissolved, because I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and that I know that He has already prepared a better place for me.

That is the kind of assurance we all should strive for and yes we are going to be judged for our sins of omission and commission, but I serve a Lord who keeps me under His grace and mercy. So don't worry. "Stop judging by mere appearance, and make a right judgment." I was motivated to write about judgment because I heard a preacher make a judgmental comment about a child born out of wedlock. I wanted to jump up and correct him, but just about the time I prayed, the preacher caught himself and tried to back track. But it was too late the hurt was all ready received by everyone sitting in the congregation who was born out of wedlock. First of all a child born out of wedlock is not born in sin, for the child

see CARLTON JONES page 18

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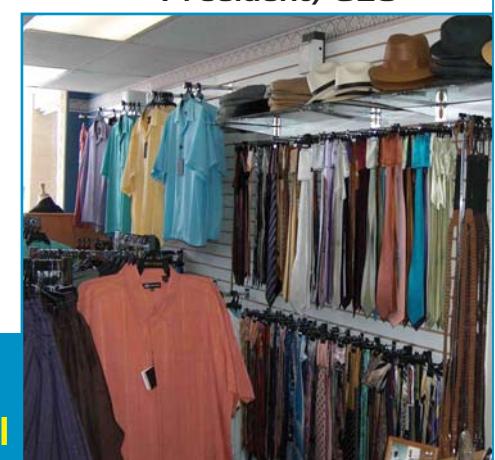
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THE 2006 VOTE



What is a primary?

The purpose of a primary election is usually to determine which candidate will represent its party in a subsequent election. So, if you are a Democrat voting in the primary for state governor, you are choosing one person from a group of Democrats to run for your party. Since Florida is a closed primary state, you can only vote for a candidate in the party to which you are registered.

Once the primaries are over, the candidate with the most votes goes on to run against the other candidates with the most votes from their respective parties for the office. Now you must vote again in the general election.

Dates:

Primary Election: September 5, 2006
General Election: November 7, 2006

Early Voting

Early voting began in the latter part of August and will continue through September 2. You will be able to vote eight hours per day on each weekday during the early voting period and eight hours in total for each weekend.

Who can register to vote?

In order to register to vote, a person must:

- * Be a citizen of the United States of America;
- * Be a Florida resident;
- * Be 18 years old (you may pre-register if you are 17);
- * Not now be adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting in Florida or any other state;
- * Not have been convicted of a felony in Florida, or any other state, without your civil rights having been restored;
- * Provide your current and valid Florida driver's license number or Florida identification card number. If you do not have a current and valid Florida driver's license number or Florida identification card, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security number. If you do not have a FL DL#, FL ID card#, or SSN, write "NONE" in the box provided on the voter registration application.

Don't Wait too Late to Register!

While you can apply to register to vote at any time, to vote in an election you must be registered by the book closing date. If you are not yet registered to vote in Florida, you cannot vote in the September 5 primary. However, you have until October 10 to register to be eligible to vote in the general election.

Residence Address

If you move within a county after you have registered to vote, please notify your Supervisor of Elections. You may provide a signed, written notice to your supervisor, call your supervisor, or send an email. If you call or send an email, you must also include your date of birth with your change of address. If you move to another Florida county, use the Florida Voter Registration Application to change your address, and mail the application to your Supervisor of Elections. Federal and State laws require you to vote in your precinct of residence.

Got Married? Switching Parties?

If you want to change your party affiliation or change your name, you must submit a Florida Voter Registration Application to the office of your Supervisor of Elections.

Absentee Ballots

In the event that you won't be able to make it to the polls, whether you will be out of town or just plain busy, you can vote via an absentee ballot. You can apply in person, in writing, or by phone to the Supervisor of Elections. If you plan to make your request by mail, be sure to do so no later than 5 p.m. on the sixth day before the election.

What You Need When Requesting an Absentee Ballot

- * Name
- * Residence address
- * Date of birth
- * Driver's license number (if available)
- * Signature (for written requests)

Your request for an absentee ballot may be denied if you do not provide the required information.

Voter Fraud Number

If you witness fraudulent behavior while registering to vote or voting, do not hesitate to call: 1-877-868-3737. Make sure that you note the date, time, and as many details as possible in regards to the event.

Voting Machines

Depending on your polling location, you may be using a paper ballot or a touch-screen machine. The paper ballot features either an arrow or an oval next to the candidate that you wish to vote for. You will be provided a pen to fill in the missing segment. The touch-screen machines allow voters to select candidates and have a final review of their choices before casting a vote. These touch-screen machines are equipped with headphones and an audio ballot for those who are vision impaired.

What to Bring to the Poll

You will need to bring at least one photo I.D (some counties require two).

- * A Florida Driver License
- * Florida ID Card issued by a State Agency
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MARLINS continued from page 5

* Kerry Douglas, CEO Gospel Truth Magazine, Topic: "Publishing, Distribution, & Promotion"

The Marlin Fest 2006 which was a pre-Awards show concert held on the Friday, allowed you to see live performances of some of the nominees from all over the world and it was a great starter to get everyone's spirits on high for the upcoming award show. All performances were outstanding especially DJ Nicholas and Kerron Ennis' performance of their award winning song "Holy Ghost Church," which had the audience in an uproar!

As the crowds started filing in BFMI for the Marlin Awards Show on Sunday evening, everyone came in with high expectations hoping that their choices would become 2006 Marlin Award winners. The dress code was very formal, so all of the women wore beautiful gowns and most of the gentlemen who were on stage kept announcing that their wife was the best dressed lady in the house! Harris Communications provided outstanding lighting, audio, and stage management! DJ Chocolate, St Lucia, and DJ Jamie Thomas, Trinidad, were the official emcees of the show.

There were great performances in between the category presentations, but the most outstanding performance of the evening was from Stitchie (highest winner -4 Marlins) with his tune "Fast & Pray." He lit up the venue with his high jumps and fast spitting lyrics on how he will continue to fast and pray that world renowned reggae artists such as Beenie Man, Elephant Man, and Capleton, (just to name a few) will become born again Christians. Judah Praise performing their award winning "Hoorah for Jesus", Landlord with Solo performing "We Need Peace", Adrian Edgecrombe and the Bahamas Harvest Choir performed a wonderful traditional medley; and Harmonious Praise, Bahamas, Jah Pickney, Canada, and Avion Blackman were also amongst those who performed.

This Marlins Award program was done in the highest spirit of excellence and the bar for Caribbean gospel music has definitely been raised and Caribbean gospel music was presented at its best! It doesn't matter what Caribbean island you represent, or even if you represent the "big islands" called America, Europe, or Africa, and it doesn't matter what your denomination is because I saw Seventh Day Adventists, Baptists, Pentecostals, and more come together as one. Because we all ARE the Body of Christ! This was truly evident at the 2006 Gospel Music Marlin Awards in Nassau, Bahamas.

For more information on Caribbean gospel music and artists, please contact Sister Lisa Canton, KULCHA GOSPEL, P.O. Box 140282, Gainesville, FL 32614-0282 USA; kulchagospel@hotmail.com

CARLTON JONES continued from page 15

had nothing to do with their conception. Who will enter God's Kingdom? Jesus said in, Matthew 19:13-14, then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.

God setup the institution of marriage and according to His universal plan for mankind was for children to be born within the institution of marriage, however, there are many reasons that children are born out of wedlock. We have to be mindful that those born out of wedlock not only have to live through the hurt that society and the church has labeled them with but the hurt and circumstances mothers of the child born out of wedlock has to endure.

Stop judging by mere appearances. Some African American women were raped and breaded during this country's participation in slavery. Some children have been conceived because of child abuse and incest to mention a few. However, it does not matter how the child was conceived, because a child is created and wonderfully made by God. I believe the preacher was trying to make a point on the importance of abstinence and waiting until a man and a woman are married. However, he became judgmental and lost his point and the congregation. God designed the institution of marriage, however the devil has and is doing everything to destroy the institution of marriage between a man and a woman, through sin, trickery and the lusts of the world. God is in control, only He can direct our path, and only He can change our destiny. God can and will forgive us of our sins and restore a right relationship with Him through Jesus Christ His Son. I thank God that we who believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, are under Jesus grace and mercy.

There are many scholars and theologians who disagree with whether Jesus Christ was born out of wedlock. Matthew 1: 18-24, this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel which means, God with us." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. Now who can or will judge God and his wisdom on how Jesus was conceived or why he was conceived through a virgin? When it comes to the matters of God: God will reveal to us in the scriptures what we need to know and how to use them. God loves us despite the fact that we are not perfect, but that we may strive to be perfect through Him.

Stop judging by mere appearance. God loves the little children, who are under His protection until they are at an age, that they can understand the Holy Trinity and chose to accept God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son and with the power of the Holy Spirit. We must

See CARLTON JONES PAGE 22

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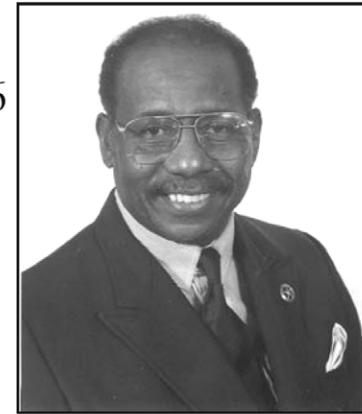
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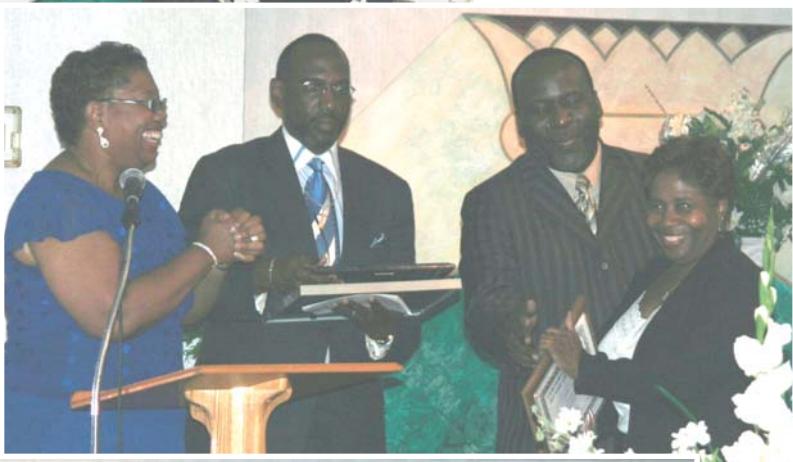
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Joseph Johnson
Chairman

Fred Beneby
Co-Chair



H. O. P. E., Inc. of Jacksonville's Empower with an Appreciation Banquet



**By Debra Edwards,
Program Director, Summer Youth
Work Program**

On Saturday, August 5, 2006 at 5:00 p.m., H. O. P. E., Inc. of Jacksonville showed their appreciation to sponsors, job mentors and participants of their first annual summer work program with a Semi-formal Banquet that was full of thanks, recognition, and praise.

The platform was accompanied by **State Representative Audrey Gibson**, who inspired and motivated us by showing much support for this program alone with **City Councilwoman Mia Jones**; **NAACP Local Branch President, Isaiah Rumlin**; **SCLC Local Branch President, Edward Exson**, who also received a standing ovation from the participants during an orientation session lead by Mr. Exson. His motivation speech reached deep into the hearts of our students with a challenging word that will not soon be forgotten by them.

Also present were **Rev. Michael Edwards**, Pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Institutional; **Rev. Steve Newbill**, Associated Pastor of First Baptist Church of Mandarin; **Rev. E. I. Norman**, Pastor Emeritus of Redeemed Missionary Baptist Church; and the speaker of the hour was none other than **Rev Gary L. Williams**, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Mandarin, who has always believed and supported the

pring Youth Summer Work Program Ended et and Graduation Ceremony

efforts of H. O. P. E., Inc. of Jacksonville, by doing whatever he can to help H. O. P. E help others prepare for empowerment. His many years of financial support and prayers have been a great source of inspiration to our organization and we thank God for him.

Rev. James B. Sampson, President/CEO was the presiding officer for this auspicious occasion. We can not overlook our **Congresswoman Corrine Brown** who was not present due to an engagement in Atlanta, but was with us in our hearts. Congresswoman Brown was one of the first (along with the Baptist Minister's Conference) to pledge \$10,000.00 and deliver on that pledge towards this program. We are truly grateful to her for her collaboration, motivation and financial support. Program Director Mr. Nathaniel Washington and Co-Director Mr. Charles Cooper did an excellent job assisting H.O.P.E., Inc. in this endeavor. Their expertise and experience enhanced the success of this program tremendously. "We were fortunate to have them both on our team," expressed President Sampson.

During the Banquet, where more than 300 people were in attendance, special awards were presented as follows:

The Sponsor of the Year: Beaver Street Foundation, Inc. on behalf of Congresswoman Corrine Brown.

see H.O.P.E. page 32





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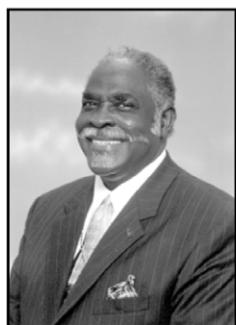
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I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. Psalm 121

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You Are Always Welcome!

CARLTON JONES continued from page 18

not judge based on the appearance of sin, I know we all have judged someone based on appearances. But leave judgment to God. I thank God for loving us so much that He wanted to restore a renewed relationship with us through His Son Jesus Christ. I thank God for Jesus being born of a virgin and that He lived among us and showed us to how to live in the image and likeness of God.

I thank God that Jesus showed us how to do great things and that He said that we can do even greater things through Jesus Christ who will strengthen us and is the author and perfection of our faith. I thank God for Jesus who took on the sins of Adam and Eve and restored a renewed relationship with the Father, I thank God that with His wisdom He sent the world Jesus so that through Him we might be saved and receive the gift of eternal life. God's love for us is so great that Jesus became the final blood atonement for our sins and that until Jesus returns we are under His grace and mercy. Praise God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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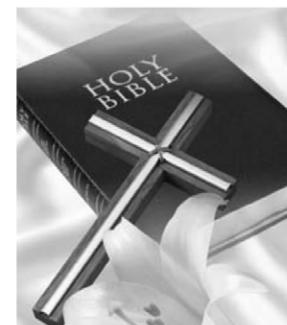
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SIMPSON HAROLD FINANCIAL DEDICATES BUSINESS TO GOD



Simpson Harold Financial had a celebration of God's goodness and faithfulness on Saturday, July 29, 2006, at their Open House/Business Dedication. After four years in the business and outgrowing its space at HOPE Plaza, the owners Claude Harold, III and Carolyn Simpson Harold stepped out on faith as the first purchaser of an office condo at Dunn's Crossing, 3450 Dunn Avenue, Suite 304. Guests included family, friends, clients, Pastor Rudolph McKissick Sr. of Bethel Baptist Institutional Church, Hermoyone Walker of Keep Safe Adult Day Care Center, Anika Hardmon of The Gary Law Firm, Stuart, FL, Joe Trottie, Jacksonville Transportation Authority, Carlton Jones, Renaissance Design Group and a host of others.



The team of professionals including Michelle Baker Hill, Denise Smith, Rita Scott, Phebe Davis (West Palm Beach, FL), Anthony Buie, Tracey Hill, and Iona Floyd are eager to provide accounting, mortgage and tax services which exceed expectations and give God glory.



CALLING ALL *DIVAS*

Ladies, has there been a yearning within you to make a difference in your community? Have you been looking for a way to give back? Have you wanted desperately to help this misguided generation of young women who continue to make bad decisions? Are you a woman of faith? There is an organization that allows you to satisfy your desire for ministry within your local community, ***DIVAS***.

Two sisters who share a common destiny, Phyllis R. Hutto and Trina D. Kenon have embarked on a pathway that has lead to a ministry of empowerment to the women of today and the future. Because of their passion to help other women achieve personal esteem and affirmation, Ms. Hutto and Mrs. Kenon have dedicated their lives to sharing the word of self-worth to women across this country. Knowing that this message needed to be shared on a global scale and having a passion to awaken the Diva in every woman, ***DIVAS*** was born.

DIVAS is a spiritually-based organization dedicated to the empowerment of others to achieve purpose through inspiration and encouragement. We are an organization made up of professional women of character and integrity who want to be conduits of change within the community and a positive influence for the women of tomorrow. We are committed to working diligently to identify areas of opportunity within our community in which to make a difference through personal involvement. We know that in order to affect change in others, we must first seek to promote change within ourselves. With that in mind, ***DIVAS*** provides personal growth opportunities through empowerment workshops, community involvement, and exposure to positive role models. Because we take our responsibility to the young women of tomorrow very seriously, we also provide leadership and guidance to teenage girls ages 13 –18 through our mentoring program, ***DIT (DIVAS in Training)***

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DIT is a mentoring program designed to provide leadership and direction to girls ages 13 -18 years of age in an effort to help them achieve success and to help them avoid unnecessary hardships throughout their lives. This program will provide these young ladies with an opportunity to be exposed to positive role models through pairing them with successful women within our organization. So often our young teenage girls are stereotyped and given less than a fighting chance. It then becomes our responsibility to provide guidance and direction to those young girls within our sphere of influence.

DIT Endeavors to:

- * Create an atmosphere conducive to positive personal growth through inspiration and encouragement
- * Provide information and exposure to educational opportunities
- * Provide exposure to culture and the arts to broaden their horizons
- * Create social awareness through community involvement and volunteer activities



Phyllis R. Hutto



Trina D. Kenon

Ladies this is your chance to make a real difference in your community and in the lives of the young women. Why Join ***DIVAS***?

- * Empowerment Workshops
- * Civic Involvement
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- * D I T Mentoring Program
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To your membership application today email your request to:
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**VOTE ON
SEPTEMBER
5TH**

New leadership to meet today's challenges and those that will arise with the growth of Orange County.

- A lifelong resident of Central Florida, Lawrence has experienced growth firsthand – it's his home. Our community is growing even more rapidly, and needs a strong conscientious hand to guide it.

As your next County Commissioner, District 2, *Lawrence is that leader.*

A fresh perspective to the Board of Commissioners and County Mayor in making crucial decisions that impact over a million people.

- Lawrence makes tough decisions daily as an attorney and mediator. Our community has issues that require a consensus builder. Balancing preservation of our community resources with diverse economic development is critical.

As your next County Commissioner, District 2, *Lawrence is that leader.*

Strong community involvement that brings a thoughtful voice to complicated issues.

- Lawrence volunteers or has been appointed to over a dozen boards and committees around the county. Our community is a wonderful place that deserves a passionate advocate to ensure a solid quality of life for our children, families, and seniors.

As your next County Commissioner, District 2, *Lawrence is that leader.*



- A lifelong resident of Central Florida, Lawrence graduated from an Orange County public school, and lives in District 2 with his wife Karen and their daughter.
- Lawrence practices civil law and is a certified mediator. He is an active advocate for abused and neglected children as a Guardian ad Litem with the Legal Aid Society Society of the Orange County Bar Association and serves as an Orange County Teen Court Judge and advisor.
- Lawrence has been an active member of over a dozen Boards of Directors including the Community Advisory Board of WMFE TV-FM (90.7 NPR and Channel 24 PBS) and the Advisory Board Council of Disney/SBA National Entrepreneur Center, to provide funding and services for the citizens of Orange County.

- Because of his strong pro bono work in the community, Lawrence was recognized by the Florida Bar and awarded a Legal Aid Public Service Award at the Florida Supreme Court.



I am excited for our region's future. Together, we can achieve positive progress for our community while we maintain the energy of our economy and quality of life.

I welcome your support in this endeavor. Please vote Lawrence Kolin on September 5th for Orange County Commission, District 2.



Our candidate for Orange County Commission will deliver. Vote Kolin September 5th!

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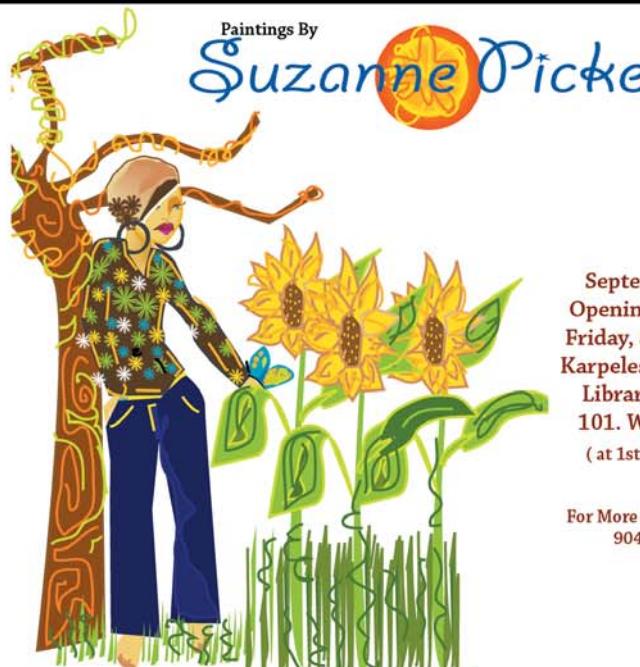
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2. elements The basic assumptions or principles of a subject.

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GERALDINE F. THOMPSON

Florida House District 39

The Service Continues



Geraldine F. Thompson



Geraldine and campaign treasurer M. Jean Butler discuss political concerns with United States Senator Barack Obama.



Geraldine served on the Affirmative Action Committee of the Florida Democratic Party and attended the 1988 National Democratic Convention as a delegate for the Rev. Jesse Jackson.



Geraldine discussing Christian outreach with gospel singer, Donnie McClerkin.

Education

Geraldine will introduce legislation to increase the number of students who graduate from high school in Florida. She would raise the mandatory high school attendance age from 16 to 18 and deny a driver's license to anyone under 18 who is not in school.



Geraldine F. Thompson and her husband, Emerson R. Thompson, Jr. have given decades of service to the Orlando community. He is one of her closest advisors.

Economic Development

She would require that contractors create apprenticeships and job training for area residents when tax dollars are spent for public projects such as a sports complex or performing arts center.

Crime Prevention

She believes that we deserve to live in a safe community. She will work for District 39 to bring dollars home from Tallahassee to get the police we need to protect our streets and our neighborhoods. By increasing opportunity in this district, Geraldine Thompson will help to steer individuals away from crime.



After receiving confirmation from the Florida Senate Geraldine served on the Human Relations Commission during the terms of Governor Lawton Chiles, her fellow Commissioners elected her to serve as Chair of the organization.

Healthcare

She believes that no one should have to choose between paying their rent and purchasing their prescription drugs. She will work for District 39 to expand healthcare services and fight HIV/AIDS.



About Geraldine F. Thompson

Geraldine F. Thompson is a leader who has devoted more than 30 years of her life to serving the people of this district. She and her husband, Emerson R. Thompson, Jr., raised and educated their three children in District 39. From a modest background, she has worked her way up and continues to give back to the community.



Geraldine spreading the good news with religious cable owner and famous attorney, Willie Gary, and Rev. and Mrs. Randolph Bracy.

Capable

She co-founded the YMCA Black Achievers Program which now brings Hispanic Leadership and youth together to build leadership skills.

She spearheaded the renovation of the historic Wells' Built Hotel, Wells' Home and the opening of the Wells' Built Museum of African American History and Culture. Authored the book Black America: Orlando, Florida.



Shortly before he left office to become a United States Senator, Florida Governor Bob Graham appointed Geraldine to the Florida Commission on Human Relations.

Experienced

She was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Florida Commission on Human Relations where she fought statewide against discrimination in the workplace, housing, and public accommodations.



Thompson Family Members (Geraldine and Thompson children; Laurise, Elizabeth and Emerson) celebrate the Humanitarian Award presented to Geraldine by the National Conference of Community and Justice (NCCJ).

Proven

She brought \$450,000 into our community to fund HIV/AIDS prevention counseling through Mt. Pleasant's "No Longer Bound Program". She authored grants to attract over \$600,000 for the restoration of the Wells' Built.

She is the founder of Valencia Community College's College Reach Out program which has enabled thousands of low-income and disadvantaged students to fulfill their dream of going to college.

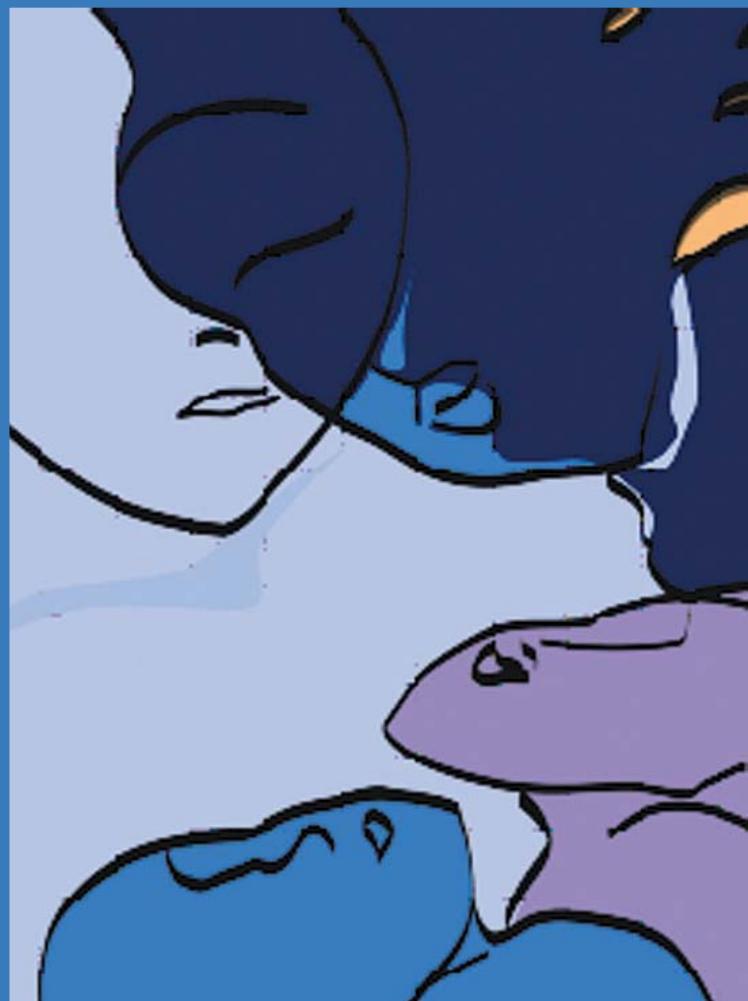


Thompson Family Members (Mr. Emerson Thompson, Geraldine, and their late mothers) celebrate the Humanitarian Award presented to Geraldine by the National Conference of Community and Justice (NCCJ).

**Geraldine
Thompson**
Florida House District 39

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"Dead Flies in the Church"

By Aundra Bryant
Tallahassee, Florida

The Rev. Cleophus Robinson Sr. of St. Louis, Missouri recorded a sermon about thirty years ago entitled "Dead Flies in The Church." As I scanned over the tenth chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes, I thought about this popular sermon which depicted how we as brothers and sisters in Christ can sometimes act. In this tenth chapter verse one says "As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor." King Solomon made some mistakes when he was king but he realized that nothing was important but giving God the glory and praise. When we think about dead flies in the church, we may only want to look a certain category of sin which we can always see but I believe there are three dead flies in the church which stink just as bad in the nostrils of God.

Firstly, there is the dead fly of self righteousness. Some of us as church folk enter into God's house as though we are doing God a favor by coming. The songwriter says that "A saint is just a sinner who fell down and got up." I have heard people testify that "The things I used to do, I don't do no more" but is it because you can't or don't want to?



Aundra Bryant

Remember, it was God's grace and mercy that brought us through and not because we belong to a certain church. If you only have it in your hand, you can put it down and pick it back up when you want to. If you only have it in your feet, you can kick it around when you get ready. But if you have the love of God in your heart, you've got to carry it twenty-four seven.

Secondly, there is the dead fly of confusion. We as church folk keep more confusion going and the scent is not only on the inside but the people who are not in the body of Christ are saying "No, something smells bad up in there". I don't know what it is but some people thrive on negative conversation and trying to put people down. If they are not in charge, they try to find fault in every phase or ministry of the church. These troublemakers complain from the pulpit to the children's church. I believe that they are related to the goat family because when they give a comment on the operation of the church, they say "It's doing fair but if I were in charge..." We must keep this in mind, no person can lead all the songs, pray all the prayers, teach all the classes or chair all the boards. Every member in the body of Christ has a charge to keep and a God to glorify.

Finally, there is a dead fly of fellowship lying it seems in every corner of our churches. The first step in fellowship is communication and we sometimes do a poor job of that. I don't know if some of us think we are better than our sisters and brothers but we need to show more love and compassion. There were times of old when our parents may not have been able to congregate a sentence but they had enough sense to speak to one another. None of us have anything to boast about because it was God's blessings which put us in places where we've never been and given us positions we've never held. As the saying goes, we had houses where we looked down and studied agriculture and looked up and studied astrology. Let's not ruin the fruits of the Spirit with these dead flies.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

By Pastor Leon R. Bing

Ps 138

1 I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answered me, and strengthened me with strength in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.

6 Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth forever: forsake not the works of thine own hands. **KJV**

This month I want to have an interactive article. So as you get into reading this article, wherever you see a blank line, (_____), I want you to place your name there. Now you can write it in or you can just simply call out your name. For the purpose of building your faith, I strongly suggest that you call out your name.

I will mainly focus on verse #8, but please read the entire Psalm in order to receive the whole message of what the spirit is saying to you.

Now the psalmist is giving "high praise" to the Lord our God for the many wonderful things He has done in his life. As you have read, God has truly blessed David in all areas of his life. But David sums it up in a powerful statement in verse eight! This is where we will focus our interactive study.

Let us look at verse #8 in the New Living Translation in order to get a good understanding of what the Spirit is saying unto the church.

Psalms 138:8

The LORD will work out his plans for my life-- for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever. Don't abandon me, for you made me. NLT

Okay, now let us practice using our own names as we read verse #8:

The LORD will work out his plans for (_____'s) life-- for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever. Don't abandon (_____), for you made (_____. NLT

Very good, make it personal! So don't forget when it is time to use your name speak it out!

God's plan for (_____'s) life, well first, what is God's plan? Let's look at Gen. 1:26-28

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all

the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion

over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. KJV



God's plan for your life from the beginning was that you have dominion over everything on the earth. (And just think, here we are, some of us are afraid of dogs, cats, lizards, grasshoppers, spiders, bats, etc.) Okay, maybe I do have a little fear of Snakes! But we were to have dominion over all of that! Later God said if we would obey is word, (paraphrasing), we were to be the head and not the tail, above and not beneath, our enemies would come at us one way and flee from us seven ways! Praise God!!! If we would just obey Him!

In Psalms 138:8, we see God's assurance that the plan for our lives is good. Let us one last time look at the two versions together, and then break them down.

Psalms 138:8

The LORD will perfect that which concerneth (____): thy mercy, O LORD, endureth forever: forsake not the works of thine own hands. KJV

The LORD will work out his plans for (____)'s life-- for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever.

Don't abandon (____), for you made (____). NLT

"The LORD will perfect that which concerneth (____)" Let's break this down! This is telling us that:

- God will complete what he has begun in (____).
- God will not abandon (____).
- God will not promise to save (____), and then fail to fulfill his promise.
- God will not encourage (____), and cast (____) off.
- God will complete what he begins.
- God will not convert a soul, and then leave it to perish.
- Grace will complete what grace begins.

Whatever God has spoken concerning you will come to pass! Even if people or situations have sidetracked you, God will complete that thing concerning you! He loves you; you are the apple of His eye!

Remember this:

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: KJV

Or should we say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in (____) will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

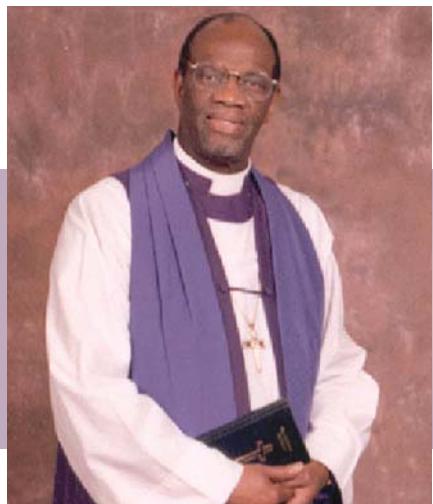
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Zechariah 4:6



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Not Long Ago, In a Land Not Far Away...

By: Faith Maginley
Staff Writer

If you were black in America just over 40 years ago, the act of voting might have gotten you harassed, threatened, beaten - even killed. If you could find the polling location, which was often elusive, you would have been subject to paying a poll tax or taking a literacy test. Just over 40 years ago. People are still alive that experienced this treatment.

With another election upon us, it is important to reflect on our struggle to vote in this country. Too many of us take the right to vote for granted. Civil Rights Activist and journalist Ida B. Wells attended a march on Washington in 1913 organized by the National American Women Suffrage Association. Leaders of the organization insisted that she not march with the rest of the women because some of the marchers "threatened to pull out if a Black woman marched alongside whites."

James Chaney was just 21-years-old when he, along with two colleagues, was murdered in 1964 by a group of Ku Klux Klan members. Chaney and his colleagues organized voter registration projects and voter education classes. There are countless stories that echo the struggle that African Americans have endured to be able to freely go to the polls. If for nothing else, vote in the name of those before us who made it possible. We owe it to them, and we owe it to ourselves.



Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrew 11:1

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H.O.P.E. continued from page 21

* Corporate Partner of the Year: Landstar Transportation, who provided 5 mentorship and paid compensation to the participants that was above and beyond the program regular compensation.

* Business Partner of the Year: Trent Underground Sprinkler & Landscaping, who rewarded three participants with bonus compensation at the end of the program, that total \$1,500.00.

* Participant of the Year: Jariah Kohn, who was one of three participants at Trent that received a bonus compensation of \$900.00 for his hard work, dedication and commitment. Jariah did not miss one of day; was never late; and work hard. This bonus compensation shows that hard-work and dedication will pay off.

Other Sponsors that were presented with a plaque was: Baptist Minister's Conference of Duval and Adjacent Counties; American Legion Post 197; First New Zion Missionary Baptist church; Willie & Andrea Henry; First Baptist of Mandarin; Jerusalem Missionary Baptist; First New Zion Christian Academy and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Florida, Inc. We thank you so much for your generosity. And appreciate each sponsor for your financial support. Your investment into the lives of our youth will bring a return that can never be measured by dollars and cents.

Other Partners (job mentors) that were recognized with a certificate of appreciation were:

ABC Christian Academy; A. L. Lewis Community; Available Pest Control, Bernard Beauty Supply; C. E. Realty, Inc.; Campus Towers; Clayton Company, LLC; Courtney Manor Community; Credi, Inc.; Dixon & Carter Mortgage Co.; First Coast African America Chamber of Commerce; First New Zion Christian Academy; Gerald Jones CPA, PA; Hargrave & Associates Financial; Hope Plaza; Here's to your Health; Johnson YMCA; Kendall Court; Law office of Robert Calvin Rivers; Law office of G. Victor Murray; Morris Manor; Nia Terrace; Nubian Beauty & Hair Supply; Pennick, Wooten & Associate; PSI Family Services, Inc.; Reginald Estell, Jr. P. A.; Rosalind Villas; Simpson Harold Financial Services; Soutel Optical; Success Academy Christian School; The Worship Place; and Total Care Mortgage, Inc.

See H.O.P.E. Page 34

LIBERIA AVENUE COMMUNITY PROJECT and MT. MORIAH BAPTIST ANNUAL PICNIC

Feverish planning for a great Community Celebration is ongoing between the MT. Moriah's Congregations for Community Action (CCA) Leaders , Palm Bay's Departments of Public Works, Fire, Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Community Development and Bayfront Redevelopment.

The Liberia Avenue Project Celebration in conjunction with MT. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church Annual Picnic on September 30, 2006 from 10a.m.-4:00 p.m., is the overwhelming cumulative success of almost three years of persistent determination, numerous community meetings between the residents of Driskell Heights (formerly known as Powell Subdivision) Palm Bay City official's and CCA Leaders which can only be paralleled to the skillfully bargaining at any corporate board room table across America.

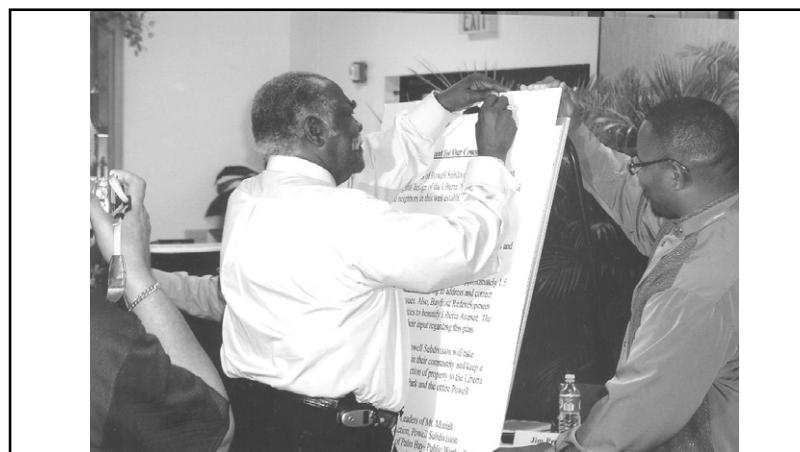
The Liberia Avenue Project which is in Palm Bay was introduced by two of Palm Bay Police finest, Police Officer Robert Combs Jr. and Sergeant Tim Lancaster via a method called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPDT) to the Palm Bay City officials. Through numerous internal meeting this idea was deemed feasible and funding was secured for this 1.5 million-dollar project, which would turn an entire existing street into a linear park with benches, winding sidewalks and other amenities.

The Driskell Heights residents were informed of this proposal and multiple heated discussion ensued. MT. Moriah CCA- Leaders, sisters and the residents of Driskell Heights, Mrs. Annie Walker and Mrs. Shirley Clark, brought their concerns to a MT. Moriah- CCA meeting and the rest is now history. Driskell Heights residents meet with Palm Bay City officials on multiple occasions along with pillars of our community, Rev. Harvey Riley , Rev. Norman Gleason , Dr. Doretha Fields and CCA Leaders in the forefront, which resulted in the residents being able to design their own new state of the art road. Liberia Avenue now boasts 30 Washingtonian light, beautiful mature magnolia trees, a retention pond, winding sidewalks and a heightened revitalized community pride.

Tim Ford- Bayfront Redevelopment Director and Glenn Morris-Director- Palm Bay- CDBG, Jim Proce Director of Palm Bay Public Works Dept. have been a pivotal source of funding and advisers through this entire endeavor. The strongly established relationship between the residents of Driskell Heights , Palm Bay City officials and MT. Moriah- CCA Leaders have lead to a Covenant between our community and City officials being signed on June 8, 2006.

Bayfront Redevelopment has graciously offered to fund this Community Celebration that will offer live entertainment, games and catered BBQ with all the sides food. MT. Moriah Baptist church will also be providing delicious food, homemade lemonade and tea, and live gospel music. MT. Moriah Missionary Baptist church is located at 2295 Adams Street N.E., Palm Bay, Florida.

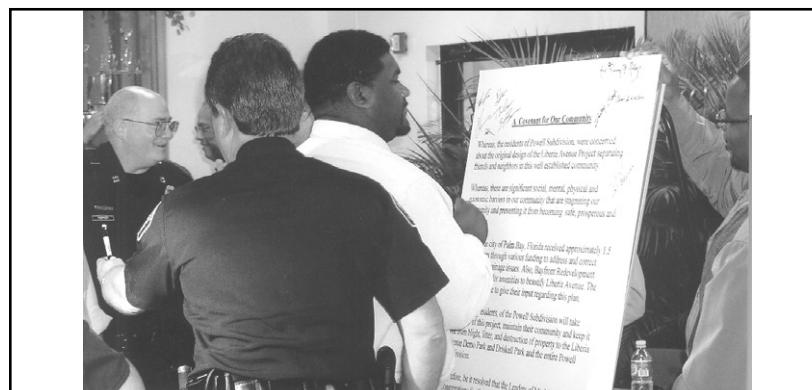
Please contact Janice Everson- (321) 961-0569 or Shirley Broomfield at (321) 961-3696 for additional details or questions.



Rev. Dr. Harvey L. Riley, pastor of Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist, signs the Covenant



Captain Alan Abner, Palm Bay Police Dept, directly over Driskell Heights supports the Covenant.



Berrington Brown, Senior Engineer of the City of Palm Bay Public Works, chairs The Liberia Avenue Project



Pal Bay Police Chief Berger, Officer Bob Combs, Jr.,
Sgt. Tim Lancaster, and Deacon Arthur Payne
support The Liberia Project

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H.O.P.E. Continued from page 32

We are very grateful to these businesses and organizations. Without them opening their doors and heart to our participants, by being their job mentors, this program would not have been the success that it was. The majority of businesses are small and minority owned businesses within our community. They each saw the vision and they too were concerned about our youth having a safe and productive summer. Each partner invites you to their place of business, so please let's support them too. We must learn to take care of home first, and that's exactly what these businesses and organizations have done this summer. THANK ALL OF YOU!

During the banquet we had the opportunity to say thanks to the many parents who entrusted their most valuable possession with us (their children). Students where required to spend four hours a day, for two weeks in an orientation class that provide them with training in workforce skills, life skills and business etiquette in order to equip them for the four week of on the job training and mentoring. Volunteers throughout the city responded to the call and poured out valuable information that made an important impact and will never be forgotten nor taken for granted. What this program taught us is that our children do want positive things to do and learn. ALL ARE NOT THUGS! These are children that are raised by good parents to become good people. It's just that we (adults, leaders, and communities) have not included them in the plans that we make. They want to work, but where are the jobs for them? They want to have safe places to go for entertainment, but where are the game rooms, skating parks, movie theatres? And the list goes on and on, but they are not in our community. We must provide communities and opportunities that are conducive to younger as well as older citizens.

Our goal was to assist 100 youth in our summer work program. We actually served and assisted 80 and only two did not complete the program. Five high school graduates who will be attending college this semester will receive laptops computers. In addition, two of our participants were hired by the business partner that mentored them.

A Graduation service was held on Sunday August 6, 2006 at the First New Zion Missionary Baptist Church where we recognized all the participants who actually completed the six week summer work program. They were given a certificate of completion in a graduating atmosphere.

These two event marks the end of a six week program that was created in an effort to decrease the amount of juvenile crimes and arrest in Duval County, by providing students (age 15-18) with job education, positive life & workforce skills, and job placement for six weeks during the summer. The purpose was to create positive opportunities for our students while out of school for the summer; to provide business etiquette, on the job training and mentoring to students during the summer; and to create future leaders, entrepreneurs, and productive citizens.

TO ALL OUR PARTICIPANTS WE SAY MAKE US PROUD.... USE THE SKILLS THAT YOU LEARNED OVER THE SUMMER.

TO SPONSORS, PARTNERS, AND PARTICIPANTS WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU NEXT YEAR (2007)!

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- **Fought attempts by special interests to silence voters.** When special interests in Tallahassee tried to undo Floridians’ demands for higher wages, smaller class sizes and protection of the Everglades, Scott helped lead a coalition to make sure that the voters’ voices were heard.

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About Scott Randolph

Scott Randolph and his wife, Susannah, live and work in Orlando. Scott is a respected advocate and environmental attorney, leading the fight for clean air, good government, and health communities here in Central Florida.

Scott’s commitment to working families has earned him the endorsement of the Florida AFL-CIO. The Orange County Young Democrats honored Scott with this year’s Paul Wellstone Grassroots Activist Award.

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- **Affordable Healthcare.** Scott will fight to keep healthcare affordable, prevent large corporations from sticking taxpayers with healthcare costs, and stop HMOs from taking over healthcare for our children and seniors.



Mr. Speaker Speaks

NOW IS THE TIME, WHY WAIT?

By Vincent T. Edwards
 Blessed Enterprise
 Tallahassee, Florida

As an inspirational and motivational speaker I am often asked, "What do you do? And what do you talk about?" My answer is typically my profession allows me the opportunity to "Motivate Minds To Move From The Mundane and Mediocre To What Matters Most."

I share with companies, institutions and organizations what it takes to get "Out In Front." Once they are focused and through further dialogue they see that I provide reasons for individuals to ACT NOW, get people thinking about where they are in life, and impel them through influence to reach their potential. To start achieving their dreams, goals, and aspirations they learn that they must ACT NOW. If Not Now When? Life on this earth is finite and time waits on no one. If you are not working on your dreams, goals, and aspirations, you are working on someone else's. What are you waiting on? Karen Lamb's quote states "A year from now you may wish you had started today."

When you look at all of the possible obstacles in life, a familiar killer of dreams is PROCRASTINATION. One must become disciplined to act/perform. Discipline allows one to progress and move forward a little at a time. This progress can be painful during the process. Learn to avoid putting things off. Do It now!! If you don't act now where will you be in the next 5, 10, 20 years? If you continue along the same path without growth what will be your response later in life? The one that comes to mind is "I would



Vincent T. Edwards

have, I could have, I should have." I admonish you to not let this be your response. Which do you prefer?

The pain of buckling down and doing it now or the pain of regret and wishing you would have moved sooner. If you are waiting on luck to get you to where you desire to be, in my opinion you will be waiting a long time. The graveyard is full of individuals waiting on their ship to come in. Get Up, Get Ready, Get Going. People who succeed are prepared when they are presented with opportunities. They do not blame others for their place in life. They take full advantage of what they have, leverage it and move forward. What are you waiting on? Do It Now. If Not Now, When?

Vincent T. Edwards "Mr. Speaker" is an inspirational and motivational speaker/radio talk show host. If you would like for Vincent T. Edwards "Mr. Speaker" to speak at your next event (conference, convention, special event etc.), contact him on the web at www.blessedenterprise.com, by phone at 850.309.2999 or by email at mrspeakerspeaks@blessedenterprise.com



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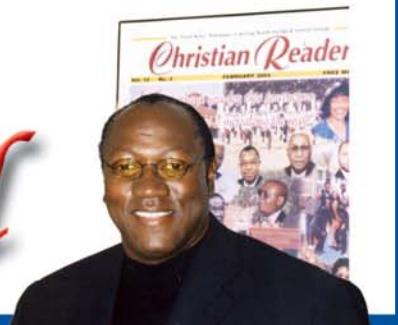
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Publisher's Editorial



Darryl A. Barrs, Sr., Publisher / Managing Editor



Black Pride/Power Personified in Business

There is a new spirit of Black Pride and Black Power exemplified in our communities. It is the success of the Black Businesses mostly due to their dedication and commitment to excellence. Blacks today are rising to the top in every area of business from mortgage banking & finance, real estate, accounting, law, medicine, investment, and retail. There was a time when the only businesses owned and operated by Blacks were funeral homes, beauty parlor/barber shops, and restaurants. Times have changed and so have Blacks in business.but not to the acclaim of many.

Success in business is important. Pride and Power are only two of its the many accolades. Pride and Power are necessary in every arena of success and every area of growth. It is debatable which comes first - Pride or Power? Success in business producing pride, or success in business producing power? Are we proud because we have power? Are we powerful because we have pride?

The Power of Business ownership comes in having the ability to control ones own destiny and financial future. When you accept a job, you are given a salary. At the end of the year, you can add up your pay stubs and yes, minus taxes, insurance and other deductions, your employer was true to their word in the salary they offered you, despite their increasing daily demands and extra workloads. This salary determines the type of house you live in, the kind of car you drive, your ability to educate your children, the caliber and quantity of your free-time, and how well you can support your church - among other thing.

The Power of Business ownership allows you to chart your own financial path. If your mind can conceive it, business ownership supplies a mean to achieve it. There is power in having a choice, having freedom of expression, having ambition, and having control over your life. You are the Boss.

The Pride of Business ownership comes mostly from the its fruits. When you look back over the countless extra hours you have worked and see what you have built, the people you have employed and helped, and how in your own little way you have made a difference in this world. That's the Pride of Business ownership.

Those who elect to accept the challenges of business ownership are special. These people have not taken the easy way, instead, their path is one that is criticized and ostracized. I have been self-employed all of my adult life, and because of it, I have been

somewhat of an outcast even in my own family. I don't know if it is because people can't understand why anyone educated would volunteer to ride the roller coaster of feast-or-famine. Or maybe, others see your self-employment as a mirror held up to them reflecting their neglected ambitions. Regardless, instead of gravitating around our business leaders, we far too often shun them.

The Christian Reader Newspaper each month presents between 65 to 70 Black owned businesses in each edition. These are successful businesses that are worthy of our support. They have sacrificed and invested in their businesses so to offer the highest quality of service and the very best of products to their customers. These are businesses that can hire and inspire our youth, and allow them future support for their families that will ensure a productive Black community in the years to come.

Society has taught many of us to reject those whose abilities can advance us when in other communities, the same type of individuals are championed. How do you feel when you open the Christian Reader and see the faces of Black men and women, young and old, running their own business? Some refuse to even open and read the paper because of such societal conditioning. We must move forward as a community - realizing all will not come at first, some not at all. In order to be viable as a community, we must support our Business Leaders.

Stop by their shops. Buy from them. Call and encourage them. If you are considering starting your own business, consult them. I remember over the 12-year period we have been publishing the Christian Reader Newspaper, almost 2 dozen other Black newspapers was started. Not one consulted nor referenced me as an established publication. I could have shared some of the ups and downs of being in the business, and maybe even provided some guidance around pitfalls. I could have shared my mistakes and countless loses. Needless to say, none of these new publications are around to date.

I am proud of the businesses we are blessed to present to you each month. I know of the power they possess to make great changes in the lives of other. These businesses are making a difference today. These businesses say to the world that as Black people - we can. and we will. These businesses exist for you and because of you. Let's give them the support they need. They are worthy of it.

Fine-tune your crystal ball for retirement

You hear a lot about what can go wrong for you in retirement. Maybe you won't save enough money to retire as comfortably as you want. Perhaps you'll have an investment mix that won't help you meet your financial goals. What you don't often hear is that you may not have planned with the correct information in mind. Underestimating what retirement will cost in the future can be the biggest hindrance to a financially comfortable retirement.

An educated guess

Many things will affect your retirement income, but a few can knock your retirement plans completely off course. In order to intelligently plan for retirement, you will need to make at least an educated guess about five things in your future. How long will you live? How much will taxes take from your retirement nest egg? What will goods and services cost down the road? How will inflation have an impact on those costs? And what will you spend your money on?

No one can give you a definitive answer about your longevity, but a little information can help. Babies born in 2001 are expected to live to age 77.2, with women living longer on average than men. At age 65, however, the average American will

live another 18 years, meaning the older you are, the longer you'll likely live. Life expectancy is almost two years longer than in 1990, so you might assume that medical advances will keep life expectancy growing. You may also want to look at your own family's history. How long did your ancestors live? Did they have medical conditions, such as cancer or heart disease? Finally, look at your own habits such as exercise, smoking and eating to see if they are conducive to a longer life.

Taxes during retirement are a little more difficult to pin down, but you can guess that they won't go away. Look at your personal tax situation, such as whether retirement income will be taxed at ordinary income tax rates or at the capital gains tax rate. The state tax structure where you will reside in retirement will also play a role in this calculation.

Future shock

Next, take an educated guess about costs when you retire. Inflation can eat away at the value of your future dollar, as the same dollar will buy fewer goods or services when prices are inflated. Although tame in recent years, inflation has also been known to rear its ugly head, as witnessed during the early 1980s. Remember that all costs don't rise at the same rate. While

inflation may have been low in recent years, medical costs have risen much more quickly. The price of other goods, such as gasoline and home heating fuels, can fluctuate wildly.

To figure the effects of inflation on your retirement dollar, you'll want to know what you may need to consume. Medical costs are a wild card, as are long-term care costs, but you can protect against inflation in this area by owning the appropriate insurance. What about your day-to-day living expenses? Some retirees underestimate what they'll need in the future because

they don't fully envision what tomorrow will bring. Today's retirees are generally healthier and more active than their predecessors. While good health can cut medical costs, a more active lifestyle can add to your expenses. Travel, college and even new businesses are now a part of the retiree landscape. Work with your licensed financial professional today to help plan for tomorrow.



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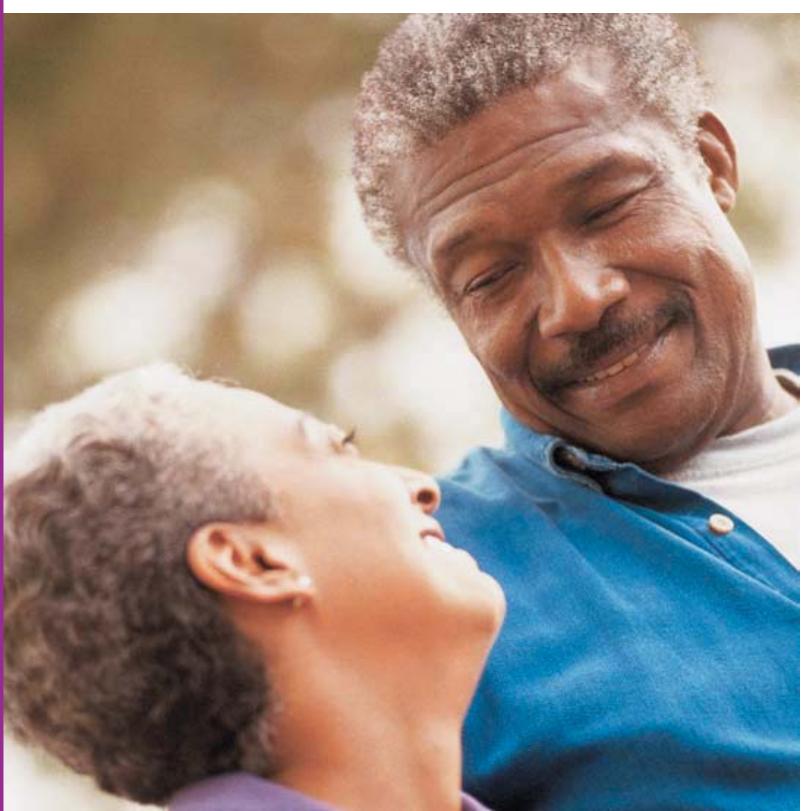
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KATRINA LESSONS - ONE YEAR LATER

Katrina Didn't Close The Race Divide

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin is singing a different tune these days about the federal government. A few months ago he effusively praised the Bush administration for stepping up efforts to aid the city's recovery. Now he's saying that the government has bombed badly. And he blames it on one thing, racism. The mayor's compliments and bitter blast tells much about what Katrina did and didn't do to close the racial divide.

But that's not the only sign that the divide is still gaping. A month before Nagin's outburst, the feds announced that they'd investigate the horrific incident where police in the white flight New Orleans suburb of Gretna turned back at gunpoint hundreds of desperate, panic stricken, mostly poor blacks attempting to flee Katrina's devastation. Gretna officials wailed that race was not the motive in their ugly, inhumane act. They claimed that they didn't have the resources to deal with the crowds. That's malarkey, and their words in the first hours after Katrina hit prove it.

They lambasted the flood victims as criminals and claimed they threatened life and property. These are well-worn racial code words. Though there was absolutely no evidence of any wrongdoing by the overwhelming majority of the victims, police and officials equated black with criminal. If those fleeing in headlong frenzy for their lives were white, and middle class, city officials would likely have embraced them with open arms and bent over backward to provide whatever food and shelter they could.

While the federal investigation is welcome, it took way to long. State and federal officials should have dumped city officials on the legal hot seat immediately for their disgraceful action. But it took repeated demands by civil rights groups to investigate, and two protest marches by national civil rights leaders. The Louisiana attorney general took months to investigate. And despite an ACLU demand, has refused to make its findings public. Given the glacial pace of most federal civil rights probes, Katrina will be a faint memory by the time the feds finish. The likelihood of any action is probably nil.

The first tip that race would constantly shadow the Katrina debacle was the wide gulf in black and white reaction to Bush and the government's initial fumbled relief efforts. In polls most blacks relentlessly hammered Bush as mean-spirited and callous for his foot-dragging. The conspiracy mill churned furiously. Many blacks publicly, and even more privately, groused that there was a hidden racial hand in the turgid response. Many cheered hip-hop artist mogul Kanye West's verbal lash of Bush that he hates black people. Most whites criticized the sluggish federal response, but attributed it to bureaucratic bungling, not racial malice.

A year later, the polls would likely show the same racial division on Bush and the government's Katrina bungle. It's too painful for many whites to think that the federal government, their government, would cold-bloodedly leave Americans to die, even if most of them were

black and poor. And it's too painful for many blacks to believe that racial indifference wasn't the prime motive for the government to leave so many poor blacks to twist in misery in New Orleans.



Earl Ofari Hutchinson

In the year since Katrina raged through the Gulf, race has played out in other big and little ways. The Congressional Black Caucus and civil rights leaders complain that Bush and Congress have reneged on their pledge to provide billions for relief and rebuilding, that thousands of mostly poor blacks are still scattered to the nation's four corners, and they remain homeless, jobless, and dependent on dwindling government subsidies. Meanwhile, Bush has virtually dropped poverty from his vocabulary, and there's no public clamor for him to put it back. City officials in Houston and other cities blame Katrina victims for crime, poverty, and assorted social ills.

In a recent poll by the Louisiana Recovery Authority, a majority of whites said they did not want New Orleans to return to its pre-Katrina racial demographics. That was a rude way of saying that they did not want the city to be majority black. Some privately whispered that the displacement of so many blacks made the city safer, cleaner, and less poverty stricken. In contrast, the majority of blacks told pollsters they wanted New Orleans to remain a majority black city. The great fear was that the displacement would dilute black political strength.

Race was also rammed into the mayor's race. When Nagin was first elected, many blacks regarded the former corporate communications exec, and political novice, as a safe, bland, business friendly guy that wouldn't cater to black interests. Katrina changed that. Nagin transformed his winning campaign against white Lt Governor Mitch Landrieu into a holy racial crusade and became the unlikely symbol of black political power.

Katrina was race neutral, and the pain and suffering it unleashed should have brought people together in an on-going spirit of compassion and giving, not racial rancor and finger pointing. It didn't then, and a year later it still hasn't.

*BlackNews.com Columnist Earl Ofari Hutchinson is the author of the forthcoming, *The Emerging Black GOP Majority* (Middle Passage Press, September 2006), a hard-hitting look at Bush and The GOP's court of black voters. For advance order information, see www.theemergingblackgopmajority.blogspot.com*

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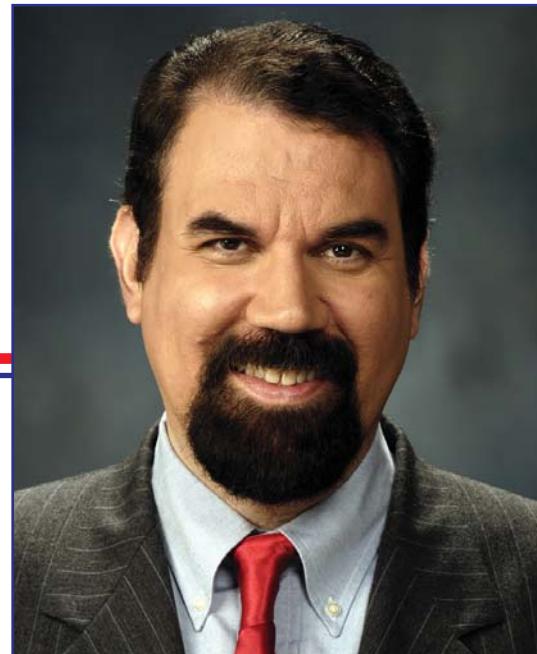
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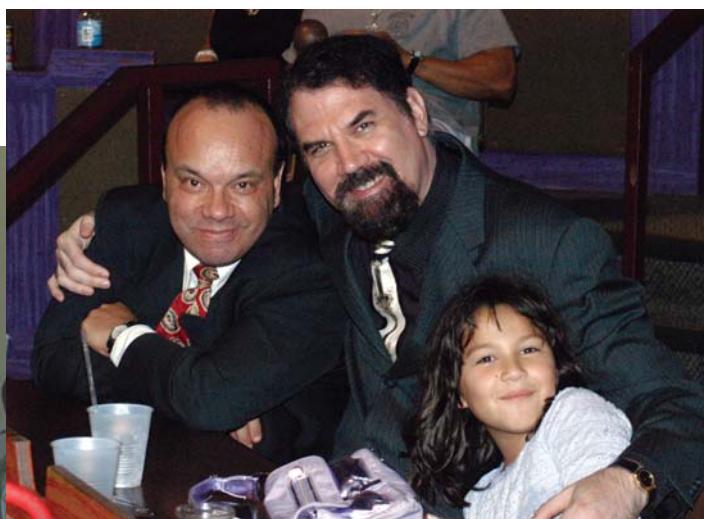
I prosecute war profiteers and corrupt government officials. In March, I won \$10 million for the taxpayers. It was the first case involving contractor fraud in Iraq. Bush refused to prosecute, but I went ahead on my own, and won.

I created and, for 20 years, I have served as an officer of the Alliance for Aging Research. Its motto is "Living to 100, and Loving It!" We

have increased support for aging research by 600%.

I also founded and was the first President of IDT, a Fortune 1000 company. I've given gifts and toys to hundreds of sick children. And my wife Lolita and I have five healthy children of our own, who love us.

In Congress, I can do more of what I've been doing – helping the taxpayer, soldiers, seniors and children. Help me to help you, and the ones you love.



**VOTE FOR
ALAN
GRAYSON
on
SEPTEMBER 5
AND
NOVEMBER 7**

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