

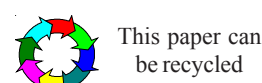


The Villager

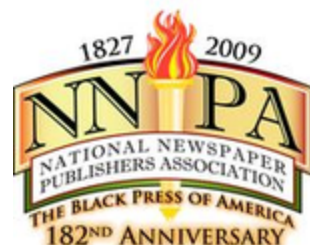


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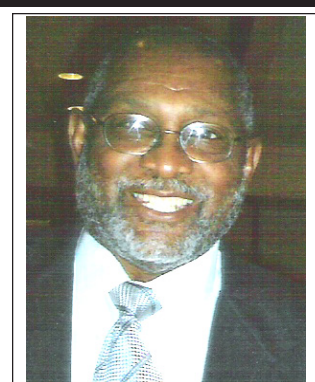
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September 10, 2010



RAPPIN' Tommy Wyatt

The work continues for the schools!

Recently, the Austin School District was released from the Texas Education Agency "Management Team Oversight" program. The district has been under the watchful eyes of the state agency for several years, because we were having problems with our East side schools. Most of the schools East of IH35 were on the unacceptable list.

That is the situation that our new superintendent faced on the first day that she reported for work. TEA permitted the former superintendent to leave the district without presenting him with the report that they were closing Pearce. Prior to the old superintendent leaving, the community had held a number of meetings regarding the school and its rating.

Dr. Carstarphen immediately called a meeting and asked the community for their input into the situation. The option was to close the school or reprogram it. The community asked for the school to be reprogrammed. Dr. Carstarphen complied with that request with a very short time limit to file the request with TEA.

This year when the reports on the schools were issued, Pearce was taken off of the unacceptable list for the first time in several years. In addition to that, 99 percent of the district's schools now meet or exceed state standards. That is quite an accomplishment for just one year on the job. And a total of 68 schools are not rated either Exemplary or Recognized, more than ever before.

East Austin parents and community leaders can be proud of the accomplishments that have been made over the last year. But, they must remember that their work is just beginning. They must work even harder to see that these schools stay on the right track. The community must continue to push for equity for the East side schools and its students.

A community group has been organized to continue the efforts. There efforts will be directed towards keeping these students on the right path. And they must continue to petition the district to put the necessary resources into these schools to assure their success.

One of the most important things that parents, school administrators and community leaders can do is to help these students to have pride in their schools. School pride is the surest way for students to be successful. When they are proud to state boldly that they go to Pearce, Reagan, LBJ or any other school in the district, they are on the road to success. School colors should be a source of pride

Venus Williams is the face of American Tennis

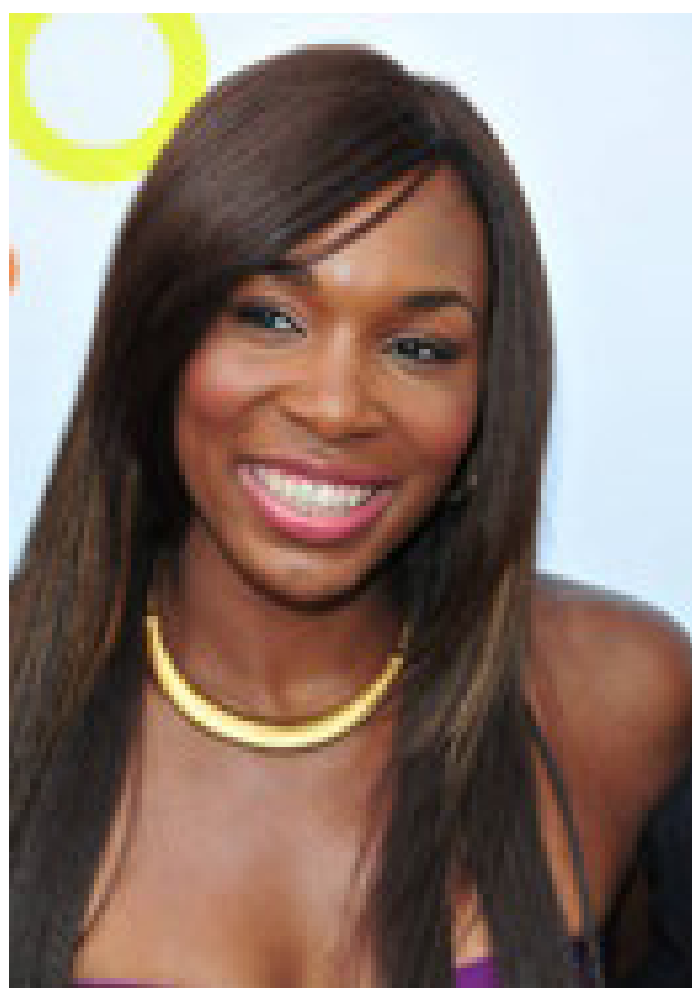
Venus Williams, the oldest of the Williams sisters, is considered a spokesperson for the women of The Women's Tennis Association. Since she and sister Serena entered the tour, they have become the American face of tennis for the women. Many times they are the last Americans standing. As was the case in the U. S. Open this week.

While Serena pulled out of the tournament because of an injury that she sustained when she cut her foot on a piece of broken glass a few weeks ago, Venus was playing her way to the semi-finals.

Venus is also considered a strong political spokesperson for tennis. It was Venus who worked behind the scenes pushing for equal pay for women. She has also worked on behalf of women on the international scene.

In 2009 she was upset that a player from Israel was not allowed to play in a tournament in Dubai. They excluded her at the last minute. She made a statement in that year in front of royalty and every one. This year, the player was allowed to play, although it was under tight security and on one of the smaller courts.

Williams said that she considered pulling out of the tournament, but the exclusion was made at the last minute, without notice to the other



Venus Williams

players. But, many believe that it was Venus who caused the tournament officials to change their minds on the issue.

Venus and Serena may have only a few years left on the tour, but they have had the greatest effect on the tour since Arthur Ashe won the U.S. Open so many years ago. He now has a court named

for him in Billie Jean Tennis Center in New York.

Both of the Williams sisters will go into the Hall of Fame when their careers are over, but it still remains uncertain what other permanent honors that will be bestowed on them. For now the tennis public will just have to be happy with them winning a few more championships.

Should "Payday Loans" Be Outlawed?

By State Senator Roderick D. Wright (D-Calif.)

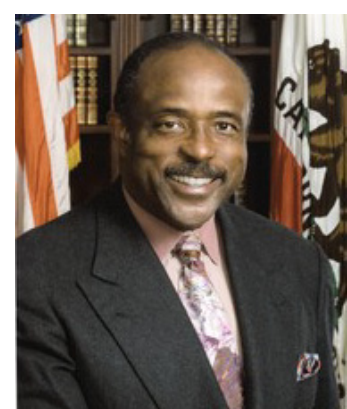
NNPA Special Commentary (NNPA) - Over the years

I've seen many articles critical of the short-term financial product commonly known as a "Payday Loan." They have been termed abusive for their high interest rates and the fact that people often have multiple loans and fall into greater debt. I don't challenge the fact that more of these loans go into default, it speaks to a larger problem. Where do people with credit issues get emergency cash? I have never seen any of those articles critical of payday loans offering real solutions.

The public must understand something about the "Payday Loan" industry. They are providing loans to people traditional financial institutions cannot, or will not serve. Often their customers have exhausted their credit, their friends and family and all other sources of less expensive cash. They typically have an immediate need and the vast majority of these borrowers repay their loans on time. Assuming the loan is repaid on time the fees are not much higher than those of a traditional bank. Depending on the amount of the loan, when measured against bank fees for a bounced check, the payday loan could actually be less expensive than a bank!

From a business standpoint, the payday lender assumes a much greater risk than a regular lender in that this is an unsecured loan to a person with admittedly bad credit. Just as a traditional bank determines the interest rate it charges based on the customer's credit score - a risk assessment - the payday lender does the same thing. With a lower credit score, your interest rate at a bank can more than double. Most payday loan customers would not qualify for even the higher priced loan at a traditional institution. Let's not forget it was traditional banks that made virtually all the sub-prime real estate loans to many borrowers eligible for a better rate!

What options would be available to this customer if the payday lender is driven out of business? They could sell or pawn their possessions for a fraction of their value. They could seek out a loan shark and assume the repayment risk that comes with that. If you think a payday loan is expensive try defaulting on a loan shark! Maybe they could just live with their utilities turned off or miss a critical medical appointment



until they get the cash. In a worst case scenario, they may commit a crime and risk prison time. Against this set of options the payday loan starts to look pretty good.

There are entire communities without a local bank. I don't think anyone would argue that payday loans are not more expensive, or even that they are the desired way to get a loan. This would be true of any hard-money loan. Fact is payday lenders incur greater risk than the other lenders which is why their cost is higher. Traditional lenders don't want any part of this market, even though every payday loan customer has a traditional banking account. You typically write a post-dated check to get a payday loan.

Many of the so-called consumer groups concerned about the poor would like to see this entire business model outlawed. Or they would like to make the interest rates payday lenders could charge comparable to those of traditional banks without considering the risk differential. This would have the effect of driving payday lenders out of business. Payday lenders are not traditional banks nor do they serve the same customers. If payday lenders are forced out of business, the need for these services does not go away. Considering the options available in many instances, the payday loan is actually a bargain.

If someone has a better option for those in need of a payday loan let's hear it. If we can require traditional banks to offer payday loans at "fair rates" to those with credit problems, let's do it. Traditional banks are allowed to hold government deposits where they pay minimal interest rates and make a sizeable profit. And as we have seen if the traditional bank makes a bad decision the government bails them out. So if those concerned offer no solutions, don't close the door on the last hope for those locked out. While the poor and credit-challenged appreciate your sympathy, if you can't help, don't hurt.

Roderick D. Wright is a state senator representing the 25th District of California.

Reeves and McDade honored at recent BIG Convention in Kansas City

The National Organization of Blacks In Government 32nd Annual National Training Conference was held in Kansas City, Missouri August 16-20th. Conferees engaged in critical training sessions for today's government professionals from across the country, with keynote speeches by Dr. Randal Pinkett the founder, chairman and CEO of BCT Partners, and Mark Morial, President & CEO National Urban League. The 2010 BIG Conference Theme, "The New BIG: Taking Chances, Making Changes & Preparing Leaders" set the momentum for the 4500 attendees from across the country.

The Austin Chapter was well represented in the National Youth Information Superhighway Program, Taylor McDade, who attends Killeen Ellison High School in Killeen Texas competed in the 8-9th grade category with students throughout the United States, and took 2nd Place in the contest with his website presentation. He is the son of Roselle and Harold Robbins. The program is designed to introduce and encourage African American students to use information technology.

The competition Theme Introduction: "Technology...Dissolving Boundaries Between Countries", Taylor presentation demonstrated how technology can be a quality learning tool and an excellent communication mechanism to stay in contact with a family and friends in the U.S. and abroad.

During the conference, Austin Chapter's Gregory



Roselle Robbins (mother), Taylor McDade and (bottom) Gregory Reeves

Reeves was recognized for his outstanding leadership, teamwork, exemplary service and dedication to strengthening the National Organization of Blacks In Government (BIG). Mr. Gregory Reeves was the recipient of the 2010 Distinguished Service Hall of Fame Award. The Distinguished Service Hall of Fame (DSHOF) award is the highest honor which can be bestowed upon any single member of Blacks In Government (BIG). Members of the DSHOF shall be referred to at public events as "The Honorable" preceding their names in recognition of this highest of BIG honors.

Mr. Reeves is a Past National President of BIG,



having served a 2 year term in 2003 and 2004. He also has held numerous positions in the organization as National Executive Vice President, National 3rd Vice President, Regional Director/National Board Member, Region VI Council Second Vice President and Chapter President over his 26 years of service with Blacks In Government.

Clothing donations needed for newly released inmates

The Travis County Counseling and Education Services, the Community Justice Center Advisory Committee, and the Travis County Sheriff Office Building Bridges: Brick-By-Brick Community Initiative are sponsoring an ongoing clothing drive for incarcerated persons being released to Travis County.

Many of the persons being released from prison or jail are without adequate clothing, and often must depend upon leftovers

from the prison or jail clothing closet

What is needed? Shirts and pants sizes Large, 1X, 2X or 3X. Clothing must be in good condition and laundered.

If you have clothing to donate, please contact Ty Campbell at 674-3873, Kali Gossett at 674-3065, or Clothing should be dropped off at 5501 (North) Airport Blvd. Suite 102 during the hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

EDITORIALS/COMMENTARY

Standing Up For Austin Families



Congressman Lloyd Doggett (D-) Texas

With all of the troubling economic news, many families are troubled about what the future holds. We need to create more jobs at a wage where folks can support their family. And we have to help Americans who, through no fault of their own, are unem-

ployed and need help to hang on. Because education and job training are the keys to economic security, I succeeded in passing a law to require that federal aid to education actually aids our local schools, instead of being diverted elsewhere by the Governor.

Locally, this would mean new federal money to close budget gaps for our Austin schools and to protect local jobs.

As I listen to local families, I have heard stories about how some have been treated unfairly by their credit card companies. Too many have told me about sudden increases in their credit card interest rates, immediate drops in their credit limits, impos-

sible-to-understand contract terms, and high and hidden fees. President Obama has now signed into law legislation that I strongly supported to provide better protection for consumers. Our new law gives you several new rights.

The new rules limit credit card late fees to \$25, ensure that gift cards are good for five years after purchase, and require credit card issuers to give good reasons for any interest rate increases. Previously, credit card companies could suddenly increase your interest rate with little warning.

Now, they must give you 45-days notice. And if you don't like the rate increase, you can cancel the card before it goes into effect.

Before these new rules, credit card issuers could hike your rate almost immediately after you signed up for a new card. Under the new rules, they cannot increase your interest rate for the first year after you sign up.

And rate hikes can no longer apply to old debt. So if you bought a new refrigerator this summer because you calculated that you would be paying 12% interest on it, your credit card company cannot suddenly raise the interest rate to 20%.

Now, no fee can be more than the violation itself; in other words, if you went \$5 over your limit, the credit card company can't fine you \$50. No longer can they charge you inactivity fees for not us-

ing your account.

A newly created consumer protection bureau has the power to offer even more help. It can ensure that credit card contracts are limited two pages of easy-to-read English instead of the gibberish we get now.

The consumer bureau would help to see that lenders operate honestly, making it easy to compare credit card terms and to determine when sellers of financial products have a conflict of interest between what is good for them and what is good for you. As former UT Law Professor Elizabeth Warren has said, we set government safety standards to prevent a defective toaster from resulting in your house being burned

down. But until this new law, we have had no safety standards to prevent your losing your house to a defective financial product.

We can now have a routine safety screening for credit services similar in nature to the screening we already have for a washing machine, a child's car safety seat or any other consumer product sold in America. These new rules will arm families with more ways to protect themselves with information necessary for more informed financial decisions.

I will continue to look for ways to improve our economy, protect consumers and create quality American jobs. Working families need more help, not the big banks.



By: Marc H. Morial
NNPA Columnist

(NNPA) - "Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred." - Martin Luther King, Jr., August 28, 1963.

On Aug. 28 in Washington, DC, two groups of Americans gathered on the Na-

tional Mall to express their vision of freedom 47 years after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s historic "I Have a Dream" speech.

Unfortunately, the two groups seemed to be marching in different directions. One rally, co-convened by Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network, the National Urban League and a coalition of civil rights organizations, marched from Washington's Dunbar High School to the site of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial under construction on the National Mall.

That group marched to "Reclaim the Dream" that Dr. King so courageously and eloquently articulated at the Lincoln Memorial on August 28,

1963: "And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back . . . We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream."

In the 21st century that means a national commitment to quality education for all. It means jobs and a living wage for all. It means affordable housing on fair terms for all.

And it means quality and affordable health care that is accessible to all. Speaker after speaker, including myself, Rev. Sharpton, NAACP President, Ben Jealous; DC Delegate, Eleanor Holmes Norton and Martin Luther King, III, echoed these

themes, which are also the major empowerment goals of the National Urban League during this, our 100th year anniversary.

It was fitting that the Reclaim the Dream rally began at a public high school. Education has always been the gateway to opportunity for African Americans and Education Secretary, Arne Duncan was on hand to once again call education the "civil rights issue of this generation." Underscoring that commitment was the presentation by Larry Handfield, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Bethune-Cookman College, of a \$100,000 four-year scholarship to high school student, Leah Carr, of Northwest

Washington.

Fox News talk show host, Glenn Beck, led the other rally, which took place at the Lincoln Memorial, the very spot where Dr. King rallied the nation to overcome its divisive past.

Beck has made a living denouncing the concept of social justice, belittling the legitimate grievances of African Americans, using faith as a wedge issue, and claiming that President Obama is racist and his policies are reminiscent of Nazism.

In short, Beck is a world-class divider, and his march was designed to take America in another direction - back to its roots of states' rights separatism. Unfortunately, Beck has amassed a

large following. Many of them joined him and former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin at their so-called "Restoring Honor" rally.

Their rally was not only about an outdated "us vs. them" vision of America, it was a cynical attempt to hijack the message and meaning of Dr. King and the civil rights movement.

As I told the crowd at the Reclaim the Dream rally, "We will not stand silent as someone seek to bamboozle Dr. King's dream. We reclaim the dream because we are here to say we must be one nation." At a time when Dr. King's message of unity is more important than ever, the question must be asked: Is America marching in two different directions?



Harry C. Alford
NNPA Columnist

(NNPA) - God has blessed me with over six decades of life on this earth. I have witnessed economic ups and downs, wars (most were foolish), political swings and a civil rights struggle that came out on the winning side. You might say I am hardened and can look at challenges as something that happens and something we can get through. However, I have never seen such economic uncertainty and our government on the verge of fiscal disaster as we are today. When will we get through it? I have no

idea and see no signs of improvement.

In fact, there appears to be a big leadership void from the top to the bottom. The White House, State House and City Hall all seem to be clueless of what to do. America, we need to examine our roots and get back to basics.

Perhaps the biggest problem is that government is just too big. The largest employer in the nation is the federal government. The highest per capita salaries are that of federal jobs. If we were to shrink the federal government to where it should be we would eliminate a gigantic part of our debt and overall federal deficit. Our economy would make a great turn for the better and there would be no need for the gigantic tax burden we all share.

Thomas Jefferson, one of our founders, stated "A government that governs least;

governs best". He would say what we have today is a government that is governing worse. We are too big, too clumsy, too wasteful and too ineffective. Two thirds of our federal agencies need to be eliminated.

Let's eliminate this public sector largesse and grow our private sector which would be self sufficient with no cost at all. Federal government involvement creates problems not solve them.

We just had a nearly trillion dollar stimulus bill which spent more money than the Iraq War cost us last year. What did we get? Basically nothing, in fact, Blacks only participated in one percent of the stimulus bill. That is not progress. They also rammed through a healthcare bill that nobody wants. Hopefully, it will get repealed during the next session of Congress. In essence,

they just don't get it. They are doing things that are wrong and that we don't want but still they do them anyway. This is not a government that is representative of the populace and that probably will spell its doom.

State governments with a few exceptions have been no better. Most are like a big business falling into bankruptcy. However, states are sovereignties and cannot file for bankruptcy. Their debt is real and somehow they are going to have to deal with it. The problem is that most states have no political courage to start doing this.

Indiana and Virginia are the only two states successfully getting out of their deficits. Most, such as California and Illinois, have pension plans that are insolvent and budgets that are deep in the hole. Their school systems are "basket cases" and their citizens have little hope

for a viable future. Show me a good governor and a fiscally responsible state legislature and I will show you a rarity within the borders of the United States.

Then there are the cities and counties which seem to be living in denial. They can file bankruptcy and many of them will in the near future leaving vendors, service providers, etc. stuck with bad debt and workers out of jobs. A good example of fiscal malfeasance is that of Los Angeles. This city, like most, is in serious debt. Still, it found it necessary to raise a revenue bond which its citizens will have to pay for somehow to build a new super school.

The Robert F. Kennedy School (K - 12) was built for the phenomenal cost of \$578 million. A comparable new school these days costs around \$40 million. They went on this fiscal binge while they have a deficit of \$640 mil-

lion, have laid off 3,000 teachers and are shortening the school year to save money. Perhaps a third of the students who will attend this school are illegal immigrants! It defies responsibility and that threatens our way of life and the security of our great nation.

My friends it is time to fire those who cannot manage our economy and replace them with fiscally responsible managers. Find out who has a clue on how to "shrink" our government at every level and spend our money (taxes) in a sacred and precious way.

We need leaders like Governor Mitchell Daniels of Indiana who has delivered a great surplus to his state. His explanation - "We spent less money than what we took in." Pretty simple for the disciplined and committed but so elusive for the greedy and irresponsible. Think about this at election time.

How Bad is It? Really Bad!

the computer giant. In a very recent debate, Fiorina looked polished and Boxer did not, although Boxer did a better job of answering questions and presenting her record. Still, if the public sentiment is simply for new faces, Fiorina may be able to edge Boxer out. California is not the only state where Democrats may lose ground. Indeed, it is possible that Republicans could earn the ten additional seats they need to take control of the Senate.

Democrats aren't helped by high unemployment rates and a sense that, though the economy is moving in the right direction, it just isn't moving quickly enough. The September 3 unemployment rate report showed the unemployment rate rising, when it ought to be falling, from 9.5 percent to 9.6 percent. Unemployment among African Americans rose to 16.3 percent. Private sector payroll employment went up, but by too small an

amount to make a difference. Meanwhile, 114,000 temporary government workers, such as those who were working on the Census, lost their jobs.

New jobs seem to be concentrated in low-wage sectors of the economy, in health care (mostly home health aides) and food service (fast food workers). Meanwhile, the economy is short about 11 million jobs, and the unemployment rate is only low because people have dropped out of the labor force. Progress? It is good to see the unemployment rate down from its October peak of 10.1 percent. At the same time, Arizona Senator John McCain was quick to associate Democrats with high unemployment and to point out that the Obama administration predicted that the unemployment rate would fall to 8 percent if the stimulus bill was enacted. Now, President Obama would like to implement a \$100 million business tax cut

to help with job creation. It's not clear that tax cuts are the best way to grow jobs. Indeed, with all the concern about deficit reduction, more tax cuts may not be the best direction to move in. Why not do simple job creation? Television interviews with people who have lost jobs and homes suggest that everything hinges on employment. The unemployment rate was less than 8 percent when President Obama took office. This election is not the time to talk about the previous administration, and about the economic mess they created. People want to know what is happening now, not what happened two years ago. Nearly fifteen million Americans have no work. More than 40 percent of those folks have been unemployed for half a year.

More people are working part time for economic reasons, because they can't find full-time work. There are more discouraged workers, people

who have dropped out of the labor market because they don't think there are any jobs for them. If those folks officially reentered the labor market, the unemployment rate would spiral up to exceed 10 percent.

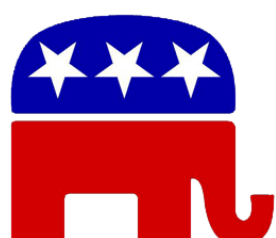
While the Obama Administration says it would be much worse absent stimulus, and if the economy had continued to move in the direction that it had in 2007-2008. But when people go to the polls, they won't ask themselves a theoretical question. Instead, they'll ask if they are better off now than they were in November 2008, when they last voted in a national election.

I think the Obama Administration is moving in the right direction and cringe at the notion that we will have another 1994 moment, when Newt Gingrich and his "Contract on America" had enough momentum for Republicans to take both the House of Representatives

and the Senate. President Bill Clinton had to govern for two years with little Congressional support and an impasse that caused government to close in 1995. With eight weeks to go until the people have their say, those who are chagrined by this economy but still support this President have lots of work to do. Those who are ambivalent should consider the alternative.



VOTE AMERICA!



By: Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

(NNPA) - In just eight weeks, voters will go to the polls, in what many see is a referendum on the economy and the policies of the Obama Administration. Republicans hope to take at least one house of Congress, probably the Senate, and they may be well on their way to so doing. Unless she picks up her pace, California Sen. Barbara Boxer will be very vulnerable to former Hewlett Packard CEO Carly Fiorina. Never mind that Fiorina led HP at a time when they exported jobs internationally, and that she was ingloriously fired from

Joshua Chapel CME celebrates 14th Anniversary

Joshua Chapel C.M.E. Church will celebrate their Fourteenth Church Anniversary at 3:30 pm, September 12, 2010.

Pastor Lois Hayes and the Joshua Chapel CMD family invites the entire community to share in this sacred event. The gospel will be pro-

claimed by Reverend Denise Nance Pierce, of Greater Mt. Zion Baptist Church and her Senior Pastor Rev. Gaylon C. Clark.

Joshua Chapel CME Church is located at 1006 E. Yeager Lane, Suite D, in Austin. For further information call (512) 339-7729.

2010 Preaching Workshop to be held at Greater Mount Moriah

Greater Mount Moriah P.B. Church is sponsoring the 2010 Preaching Workshop, September 17-18 at the church, 51st and Springdale Road.

Friday, September 17 Worship Service will feature Rev. Terrance Ford, Sr. Pastor, Greater Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas; Master of Theology (THM), Dallas Theological Seminary; Professor of Expository Preaching, Shout-herm Bible Institute, Dallas. The featured soloist will be Byron Mitchell of Strait Gate Fel-

lowship, ElginTexas.

The Preaching Workshop will be Saturday, Sept. 18. Registration begin at 9:30 a.m. This workshop is for Pastors, Preachers, Lay Speakers and Teachers. The workshop will be from 10 a. m. to 2 p.m.

The workshop conductor will be Rev. Nathan J. Robertson, Jr., Pastor of Greater Mount Moriah Primitive B. Church. The workshop is part of Rev. Robertson's Doctor of Ministry Thesis Project entitled "Preaching for Greater Communitment" at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Where Did \$206 Billion Dollars Go?

Washington DC - The National Black Church Initiative, a coalition of 34,000 churches, calls for an immediate investigation into the American Legacy Foundation. This organization, whose mission is "to build a world where young people reject tobacco and anyone can quit," has instead engaged in the systematic mismanagement of funds. NBCI is shocked that The American Legacy Foundation - in place to punish the tobacco industry, curb advertising and create programming to counteract the harmful effects of smoking - has depleted a once hefty settlement and failed the American public so completely. Nearly 50 million Americans smoke costing the United States over \$193 billion dollars in 2004. Since the inception of the Master Settlement Agreement in 1998 and the American Legacy Foundation in 1999 African Americans remain 34% more likely than whites to develop lung cancer and are being bombarded by targeted tobacco advertising, especially the promotion of unregulated menthol cigarettes, at rates significantly higher than their white counterparts.

NBCI is disappointed at this glaring truth - the American Legacy Foundation is totally failing African Americans.

Our outrage at this scandalous misappropriation of funds meant to improve Americans health stems from NBCI's clear commitment to reduce health disparities, prevent disease, and improve the health of all Americans - specifically African Americans. We have declared a health emergency in the Black church and have created Health Emergency Declaration (HED) Programs to address stubborn health issues plaguing African Americans. NBCI has collaborated with State and Local Health Departments, the private sector, faith-based communities nationwide, and more to ensure that our health



Rev. Anthony Evans

programs are science based, effective, and far reaching. We will not rest until solutions to these health problems are found and implemented in the African American community.

The American Legacy Foundation is funded from monies held by the 'Master Settlement Agreement' which represents the largest civil litigation settlement against tobacco companies - \$206 billion dollars for the benefit of 46 states. According to their figures they have granted \$150 million dollars since 2000 in an effort "to support community-based efforts and to recognize new and better tobacco control programs". Now, 10 years later, their grant program is being phased out, according to the American Legacy Foundation due to the financial downturn. They cite a desire to "maximize the impact of limited funds". Limited funds? How in one breath can you boast of spending \$150 million dollars and in the next complain you have nothing?

Even more alarming is the funds that have been dispersed to the states have also been grossly mismanaged. This extension of misconduct compounds the fraud committed to Americans who deserve to benefit from this settlement. According to Renee Twombly in her article, Tobacco Settlement Seen as Opportunity Lost To Curb Cigarette Use, "tobacco settlement dollars are increasingly being used by states to shore up eroding budgets instead of for the purposes they were intended—to offset tobacco-related health care costs and institute tobacco control programs. Congress's investigative body, the General Accounting Office (GAO), re-

ported that the 46 states party to the 1998 \$206 billion Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) spent just 24% of fiscal 2003's earnings on health programs."

The National Black Church Initiative is not alone in its outrage - Joseph Califano Jr., former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and Current chairman and President of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University states, "The purpose of [the MSA Settlement] money and how it is being used is one of the saddest public health stories that I have seen in the last 40 years." Alan Blum, M.D., director of the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society at the University of Alabama concurs, stating that the money from the MSA has "been squandered, plain as day," and the inability to curb cigarette use "represents the worst public health failure in history."

Rev. Anthony Evans, President of the National Black Church Initiative

says, "I am completely outraged. Tobacco companies - who target our youth and minorities, steal food out of our children's mouths by promoting an addictive, harmful drug, and kill our citizens - are supposed to be punished by this \$206 billion dollar settlement. The American public is meant to benefit. Neither of these objectives are accomplished - first through the American Legacy Foundation's transgressions and then later by the states refusal to utilize the funds as they are intended. We demand disclosure! If the American Legacy Foundation has already depleted funds meant to span 25 years at minimum then something needs to change. The states need to be held accountable for not funding programs to benefit the health of all Americans and especially African Americans who suffer at disparate rates. NBCI will not stand by when wrongdoings are committed and we will petition State Attorney Generals and the US Attorney General to enact change - this cannot continue."

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Youth of Today, Hope of Tomorrow

L.B.J. Has another Loss



Jaquarry Wilson
LBJ High School

On Friday, September 3rd, LBJ played Manor High School. Although L.B.J. has encountered previous losses against schools such as Hutto. They have not given up. The game against Hutto was on the evening of Friday, August 27th. Considering the skill of the L.B.J. Jaguars football team, I am surely optimistic about the remainder of the

season. If you didn't get the chance to attend the game against Hutto, or just don't remember, the score was 47-7 with Hutto having a better game. In my opinion, L.B.J. had a great game also, but maybe Hutto was more prepared. The next game, against Manor took place on September 3rd, as stated Earlier. The score ended up being 10-7 with Manor High School's football team winning the game. With the many losses that L.B.J. has encountered, I think will increase the Team's desire to win. I have faith in the team. I know that the Jaguars can win. The next game will be Friday, September 10th at Nelson Field. The L.B.J. Jaguars will be playing against The Connally Cougars. Go JAGS!

Kelly Lane offers a variety of activities



Alon Rodgers
Kelly Lane Middle School

Kelly Lane Middle School offers a number of activities for the students:

Kelly Lane Band is part of a district music program that is well known around the state. Instrumental music is taught every day as part of the regular school day. Sixth grade beginners are taught in classes and learn to play as quickly as possible. Instruments may be purchased or rented. Band students can participate in all other school activities and many students participate in a combination

of these activities.

National Junior Honor Society considers academics, leadership, and citizenship. Invitations of membership are extended to 8th graders at Kelly Lane Middle School who have a 94 average or better average for their 7th grade year. The application includes: a resume, letters of recommendation, and an essay. A selection committee reviews the application and approved students are invited to attend the induction ceremony.

Science Olympics is an exciting and challenging association of the brightest minds at KLMS. Science Olympians are selected after completing a higher-level science exam and an application process open to all students. The Knights compete against area schools in engineering and science academic events, culminating with State and National competitions in the spring.

Drama/Theater students to perform



Jaylon Knighten
Bailey Middle School

Dailey Middle School held its Back to School Night on Thursday Sept 2. This was the opportunity for all the Parents to meets their child teachers and to walk around the school if they didn't get a chance to do it

before the school opened. One of my classes is Drama/Theater. In this class we are going to build a Haunted House that will be used in one of our performances in October. We will be performing the last week in October to the students and hopefully open up to the community. We will also be performing a Puppet show to the local Elementary School in our area called Godzilla but this is not until the second semester.

Bearcats News, no games schedule for the next two weeks. We are just getting ready for game day.

Hope everyone had a Safe Labor Day.

My 4th Year with the Youth Brigade



Lexus Wren
KIPP: Austin Collegiate

Hello Villager readers, my name is Lexus

Wren, I am a sophomore at KIPP (knowledge is power program): Austin Collegiate. I have been writing for the Youth Brigade for four years. I had a great summer, I had fun going to Six Flags and I had a chance to enjoy a Jordan Sparks concert. I also did some baby sitting and worked 6 weeks as a (per-

Junior High Success takes planning



By Adrian Jackson
Pflugerville Middle School

Hello my name is Adrian Jackson, I am currently in the eighth grade at Pflugerville Middle school. This school year is extremely thrilling for me, because it is my last year in junior high, before I enter high school. I am

eager to do well.

Good study habits and setting goals are a few ways I plan to be successful.

Having my own special homework or study area helps keep me focused and eliminates distractions.

Creating a routine or scheduled time every day to complete assignments or study keeps me from procrastinating.

Setting goals, also helps to motivate me to achieve the vision for my future. Decide what is important to you, motivate yourself, build self confidence, and you can achieve anything.

Growing Up

Tori Smith,
Lockhart Junior High School

The Lockhart Jr. Band is going to have a performance in October. We will probably have more news about it at the end of September or beginning of October.

My mom says that some things that I didn't like to eat when I was younger, I now like to eat now that I am older and expanding my taste-buds. But I don't remember any of this.

Yesterday I tried Sum-

mer Sausage from a cafe in Dale called KQ. I didn't like it at first because it looked weird but then I closed my eyes and imagined that it looked like a cookie it, actually tasted good.

Other people should try this sausage and this method if they don't think that they will like the food that they are trying. If it still doesn't taste good then spit it out or throw it away. Sometimes the food just looks weird but tastes good. I guess I am growing up.

R.A.I.N. at Cedar Ridge



Marcus Austin
Cedar Ridge High School

When some people think of high school they think of a group of rowdy teenagers who have no respect for school or teachers, but at Cedar Ridge that is not the case. At Cedar Ridge we have R.A.I.N (Re-

spect, Accountability, Integrity, and Nobility). We are held accountable to show and abide by R.A.I.N.

All students at Cedar Ridge High School are placed in an academy. I am in the STEM Academy (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). My main focus of the STEM academy is Technology.

Cedar Ridge is an eco-friendly school. The toilets use less water to flush. Hand driers are installed for use instead of paper towels.

The Raider football team has bye week this week. They prepare to play Stony Point High School on September 8th. Go Raiders!

Lockhart's Biggest Cross Country Meet

Olivia Smith
Lockhart H.S.

On September 4, 2010 Lockhart held its biggest Cross Country Meet. Over a thousand runners competed in the Lockhart Invitational. Schools that competed were: Alamo Heights, Victoria East, Floresville, New Braunfels-Canyon, Bastrop, Hendrickson, Austin High, Travis, L.B.J., Luling, Gonzales, Hempstead Heights and many more. The Varsity Girls Runners for Lockhart included: Alex Lindsey, myself, Mercedes Gutierrez, Alysia Peralez and Elizabeth Brown-

ing. We ran two miles with 120 runners. Alex clocked in at a time of 12:49 placing 29th, I clocked at 13:13 placing 44th, Alysia at 13:36 placing 68th, Mercedes at 14:54 placing 93rd, and Elizabeth Browning at 15:13 placing 107 and overall Carly Cortez (9th grader) of Alamo Heights came in first place with a time of 11:33. We knew that this was going to be a difficult meet. But we did improve on placing and times. Coach Bayliss quoted "We're just going to have to work harder, run faster, run longer and we'll see." Our next meet will be held in Moulton, Texas.

sonal assistant) thanks Ladene!!! I am the youngest of 5.

This year KIPP: Austin schools are expanding. This year we added an elementary school (KIPP: Austin Comunidad). I will bring my readers information about KIPP and different things in our community.

two middle schools (KIPP: Austin College Prep, and KIPP: Austin Arts and Letters) and an elementary school (KIPP: Austin Comunidad). I will bring my readers information about KIPP and different things in our community.

Lake Travis wins 34-24 over Hendrickson



Alonzo Black
Hendrickson High School

This week Hendrickson High School took on Lake Travis in a locally televised football game. The game brought great media attention because of Lake Travis' pursuit of the all time consecutive win record for high school football. This game created so much buzz, Fox 7 came to our school Friday to interview my fellow students throughout the day.

The game took place in a sold out Hendrickson stadium late Friday night. At first the game started out slow, with HHS playing surprisingly good defense

against the number three ranked team in the country. This good defense accompanied by some great solid offense sent us into the half time down only 16-9.

Coming out in the second half, we were energized by our running back Kenny Williams, who rushed for a couple of spectacular touchdown runs in the second half. We drew to score 24-27 in the last 4 minutes of the game, and had the opportunity to take the lead with the ball in our possession. Then the unthinkable happened, we fumbled near the Lake Travis touchdown, and lost possession. The Cavaliers score on their next play and go up 34-24, and would hold on to win by that score, spoiling our hopes of an upset. Despite the tough loss, I believe the hawks have something to hold their heads high about because they took the number three school in the country to brink of the defeat. To that I say "Congratulations Hawks on believing that anything is possible".

Junior year is the most crucial



Toni Nelson
KIPP: Austin Collegiate

Hello my name is Toni Nelson. I am a Junior in Kipp: Austin Collegiate. Over the summer I was very busy, I worked at Taco Cabana for a couple of weeks as a cashier. Also me and my family took a trip to Six Flags to watch Jordan Sparks perform.

This year so far I have already learned that my Junior year is the most crucial

year of my high school career. This year I will be taking Ap English III, Ap World History, Chemistry, Algebra, Spanish III, and Junior College Seminar.

It is very important for my junior year that I focus mainly on school. I am also taking a creative writing course and for the third year I am part of the KAC Lady Cardinals basketball team. This year KAC has also added another grade of students so his year we have 100 to 200 more students, now we have freshman, sophomores and, juniors. My personal goal for the school year is to pass and exceed in all my classes, and that I will do.

Volleyball is a great sport



Tayla Terry
LBJ High School

I am reporting to you about the LBJ Jaguars Varsity Volleyball team. We started our season in August. We have a good team with good sportsmanship. Our coach, Mrs. Brown is a good coach.

She is patient and nurturing. Thus far our losses and wins are about balanced. We had a new start this year with new players, coach and schedule. I believe before the season is over we will have accomplished more wins.

Volleyball is a great sport. I would like more people to come out and watch our games. The games are exciting and competitive. Sometimes the game get intense like basketball and football. I am the assistant captain of the team and I play defense. I hustle hard on the court for my team because we are one. Kids and adults stay off drugs and stay in school!

The Villager Youth Brigade, the voice of Austin youth since 1986!



Jefferson Thomas of Little Rock Nine dies



Jefferson Thomas (left) and Ernest Green (centre) of the Little Rock Nine, sing with President Bill Clinton after receiving congressional gold medals in 1999. Photograph: Scott Applewhite/AP

Jefferson Thomas, who as a teenager was among nine black students to integrate a Little Rock high school in America's first major battle over school segregation, has died. He was 67.

Thomas died on Sunday at a care home in Columbus, Ohio, of pancreatic cancer, according to a statement from Carlotta Walls LaNier, who also enrolled at Central high school in 1957 and is president of the Little Rock Nine Foundation.

The integration fight was the first real test of the federal government's resolve to enforce a 1954 supreme court order outlawing racial segregation in public schools. After Governor Orval Faubus sent National Guard troops to block Thomas and eight other students from entering the school, President Dwight Eisenhower ordered in the army's 101st airborne division.

Soldiers stood in the school halls and escorted each of the nine students between classrooms.

Each of the Little Rock Nine received congressional gold medals shortly after the 40th anniversary of their enrollment. President Bill Clinton presented the medals in 1999 to Thomas, LaNier, Melba Patillo Beals, Minnijean Brown Trickey, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Terrence Roberts and Thelma Mothershed Wair.

Clinton issued a statement yesterday calling Thomas "a true hero, a fine public servant, and profoundly good man".

"Jefferson and I had a long visit when he came to my presidential centre for the 50th anniversary in 2007, and I was struck again by his quiet dignity and kindness. America is a stronger, more diverse, and more tolerant nation because of the life he lived and the sacrifices he made," the former president said.

In 2008, Barack Obama invited Thomas and other members of the Little Rock

Nine to his inauguration as the nation's first black president. During his campaign, Obama had said the Little Rock Nine's courage in desegregating Central high school helped make the opportunities in his life possible.

"Even at such a young age, he had the courage to risk his own safety, to defy a governor and a mob, and to walk proudly into that school even though it would have been far easier to give up and turn back," Obama said in a statement yesterday. "Our nation owes Mr Thomas a debt of gratitude for the stand he took half a century ago, and the leadership he showed in the decades since."

Thomas played a number of sports and was on the athletics team at Dunbar Junior high school, but other students had little to do with him once he entered Central, the state's largest high school.

"I had played with some of the white kids from the neighbourhood," Thomas said. "I went up to Central high school after school and we played basketball and touch football together. I knew some of the kids."

"Eventually, I ran into them ... and they were not at all happy to see me," Thomas said. "One of them said, 'Well I don't mind playing basketball or football with you or anything. You guys are good at sports. Everybody knows that, but you're just not smart enough to sit next to me in the classroom.'"

Beals said yesterday Thomas was nicknamed roadrunner because of his speed. "You could sometimes avoid danger by running fast."

She said by phone from her home in California that Thomas always seemed to bring a light moment to the crisis.

"He was funny, he had a most extraordinary sense of humour. He did sustain an enormous amount of damage and pain during the Little Rock crisis, but no matter what, he always had something refreshing and funny to say," she said. "It could be the

most horrible day and he would say, 'Yes, but how are you dressed and are you smiling?'"

Thomas also brought levity to the 50th anniversary commemorations, telling the audience how angry LaNier was with him when he stood up and cheered at a Central high Tigers pep rally.

Thomas thought the white students were carrying the school flag and yelling the school cheer. He said LaNier glared at him and later set him straight: it was the Confederate flag and the students were singing Dixie.

Born in 1942, Thomas was the youngest of seven children. After graduation, he served in the US army in Vietnam. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Los Angeles State College and worked as an accounting clerk with the department of defence, retiring in 2004.

The Arkansas governor, Mike Beebe, praised Thomas's lifetime of service.

"Arkansas and America have lost an unassuming hero whose role in the fight for equality and justice will never be forgotten," Beebe said.

Following the 2008 election, Thomas said in an interview that he supported Hillary Clinton in the Ohio primary and he also liked former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee, who made a bid for the Republican nomination.

"It would have been a hard decision for me to make if Huckabee was running against Obama," Thomas said.

Still, he said, he was overjoyed with Obama's victory.

"This was really the non-violent revolution," Thomas said. "We went and cast our ballots and the ballots were counted this time. I'm thinking now we've got to do something. I don't know what. But there are a lot of things Obama ran on, what he's saying he wants to do."



Longhorn Center for Academic Success Helps Answer President Obama's Call for Higher Graduation Rates

On August 9, The University of Texas at Austin was honored to host President Barack Obama on campus. All in attendance cheered as Rian Carkhum, an outstanding Division of Diversity and Community Engagement graduate research assistant, gave the introduction to the president.

Rian is working on a doctorate in education policy and planning and she works in the DDCE's Longhorn Center for Academic Excellence. She is a mentor and academic advisor to first-generation college students and students from low-income backgrounds. As a first generation college student herself, she is an excellent role model and advocate for these students. Rian was born and raised in Detroit where many of her family members worked for the big three automakers. Her knowledge of the current educational system and what it takes for underserved students to succeed is phenomenal.

Rian was the ideal student to introduce the president as his speech emphasized the importance of

higher education, calling education the "economic issue of our time." He stressed the need to make certain all of our students graduate, especially first-generation and underrepresented students. He noted that one-third of college students don't graduate and 50 percent of minority students don't graduate, even after 6 years.

Much of the work of the DDCE centers on this very issue: helping students succeed once they come to the University of Texas at Austin. When first-generation students and students from underrepresented backgrounds come to the university, it is too often an overwhelming experience for them. Not only is The University of Texas large, but students often don't know how to navigate the system. They don't know what help is available to them and are frequently uncomfortable approaching their instructors. Many lack necessary study skills.

Our Longhorn Center for Academic Excellence is led by Associate Vice President Dr. Leonard Moore and

Texas Education Agency Ends 'Management Team Oversight' of Austin ISD

The Texas Education Agency has informed Superintendent Meria Carstarphen that it has terminated the three-year assignment of a Management Team to "address longstanding academic performance issues at certain campuses," and "to oversee the continued implementation of school improvement and/or reconstitution plans for multi-year AU campuses" within Austin Independent School District.

The TEA Management Team had been assigned to the Austin School District since November 2007. In a letter to Dr. Carstarphen, Education Commissioner Robert Scott wrote, "The academic progress reflected in the 2010 academic accountability ratings leads me to conclude that it is no longer necessary for the TEA-assigned management team to direct the actions of the district for matters related to academic improvement."

TEA released its latest Accountability Ratings on July 30, 2010, and 109 Austin campuses — or 99 percent — now meet, or exceeds, state standards. A total of 68 Austin schools are now rated either *Exemplary* or *Recognized*, more than ever before. Seven

Austin schools advanced from *Academically Unacceptable* in 2009 to *Academically Acceptable* in 2010, and AISD now has only one campus rated AU.

At his July 30 press conference, announcing the new state ratings, Commissioner Scott said of AISD, "They're

making improvements. It makes me happy because I see a commitment to the East side and as I said last year, east and west need to meet and agree that all our kids deserve the same education opportunities and we're starting to see progress."

HACA receives rental assistance vouchers to unify families

August 31, 2010 — The Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) was recently awarded additional housing choice vouchers via the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's Family Unification Program. The 85 vouchers are worth approximately \$708,706 annually.

The Family Unification Program is a partnership between public housing authorities (PHAs) and local child welfare agencies across the country. It will provide housing choice vouchers to youth between 18 and 22 who are leaving the foster care system and are at risk of homelessness. The program will also serve families whose inadequate housing is the primary cause of separation from their children.

Eligible youth may re-

ceive a voucher and supportive services for a maximum of 18 months, while services and housing for families are not time-limited.

The last time Austin received the Family Unification Program vouchers was in 1992 and only 15 vouchers were issued at that time. Grants Manager, Eileen Schrandt, says, "The award of the Family Unification Program vouchers indicates HACA's commitment to effectively partnering with other public service agencies to bring critical resources to the Austin community." Additionally, HACA was one of only two PHAs to receive the vouchers in the state of Texas.

The Family Unification Program is scheduled to begin serving families in November 2010.

City of Austin Announces Mandatory Pre-bid Meeting for Waller Creek

Tunnel Project

The City of Austin invites vendors to attend a pre-bid meeting and networking session for a flood control tunnel. The pre-bid meeting is mandatory for all companies interested in bidding on the tunnel project. Vendors interested in bidding as subcontractors are not required to attend; however, the City encourages them to attend in order to network with potential Prime Bidders. Also on this day, geotechnical cores will be available for viewing between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the Bureau of Economic Geology JJ Pickle Research Campus located at 10100 Burnet Road, Austin, Texas 78758. The pre-bid

meeting will be: Wednesday, September 22, 2010, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (Rehearsal Lab), 600 River Street, Austin, Texas 78701 (Refreshments will be served).

The main tunnel project, estimated at \$40 million dollars, consists of constructing a storm water bypass tunnel that is approximately one mile long and ranges in diameter from 20 to 26 feet. The project also includes also includes constructing a creek side inlet and debris screening structure within the east bank of Waller Creek and approxi-

mately 280 linear feet of creek restoration between 4th and 5th Street. Major scopes of work will include: site work, hauling, ready-mix concrete, steel reinforcement of bars and rods, construction photography, demolition and excavation services.

The City maintains a Plan Room to view plans and specifications for this project at no cost; however fees will apply if copies are made. The Plan Room is located at 4201 Ed Bluestein Blvd., Austin, Texas 78721. For additional project information, please contact Raymond Young at 974-9183 or visit www.cityofaustin.org/smb.

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(Enrollment) How you receive benefits. With a number of different plans available, we are able to sign you up or get you in touch with someone who can.

(Access) How, when and where you see a doctor. We continue to add doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to the list available to our clients. We can help you find a doctor who can take care of you and your family.



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Marylyn Jackson, a Republican Candidate

By Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

Marilyn Jackson is a lifelong resident of Austin and has been involved in the community. As a concerned citizen and community member, Marylyn Jackson decided to run as a Republican candidate for the Texas House District 51 Office. According to Marilyn, the incumbent Democratic candidate has failed to "deliver" the basic needs of the district, such as, jobs and a good educational system.

Moreover, she strongly believes that the Republican platform that she is running on, will offer more opportunities to minorities than the incumbent Democratic platform.

If elected to office, Marylyn will focus on bringing jobs and improving educational matters. If elected, she will seek to have a district that is "Business-friendly with an economic climate that encourages the creation of jobs and economic growth".

Also, she will "encourage job training through an increased support of community colleges, technical schools and apprenticeships". If elected, she will

seek to improve the academic achievement within her district. She strongly believes that crime rates and gang violence will decrease as the school system improves its ability to retain students. In other words, the decrease of academic drop-out reduces crime and at the same time provides greater pools of "employable" people within the district.

Moreover, Marylyn believes that the Republican Party platform is not hostile to minorities, and especially not hostile to African Americans. According to Marylyn, the Republican Party Platform is more aligned with the African American worldview than the Democratic Party. For instances, a large numbers of African Americans are against abortion. Consequently, the Democratic Party's support of abortion is at odds with African American voters.

According to Marylyn, the Democratic Party's support of abortion has "wiped" out generations of African Americans.

Moreover, Marylyn hopes that all voters, includ-

ing African Americans will seek to learn more about the Republican Party before they vote.

In summary, Marylyn Jackson is a lifelong resident of Austin and has been involved in the community. As a concerned citizen and community member, Marylyn Jackson decided to run as a Republican candidate for the Texas House District 51 Office.

If elected, she will seek to have a district that is "business-friendly with a good economic climate that encourages job creations and economic growth. Also, she will "encourage job training through increased support of community colleges, technical schools and apprenticeships." If elected, she will seek to improve the academic achievement within her district. Marylyn believes that the Republican Party's platform is not hostile to minorities and African Americans. According to Marylyn, the Republican Party platform is more aligned with the African American worldview than that of the Democratic Party.

Eldorado for African American Contractors in Pflugerville

By Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

Over the years, the city of Pflugerville has seen a drastic population and business growth among African Americans. In the past ten years, African Americans have flourished which has caused some owners to hire employees even in the hard economic times that the country is facing. Moreover, entrepreneurs have chosen to open their businesses in Pflugerville, instead of Austin or Round Rock. Consequently, people are "flocking" to Pflugerville in quest of an "Eldorado of new opportunities". Moreover, Letitia Holliday is among the numerous independent contractors who chose Pflugerville, due to a rewarding opportunity with Bling Salon.

Letitia Holliday is origi-

nally from the state of Connecticut and has been a hairstylist for twenty years. About three months ago, Letitia took the opportunity to become an independent contractor at Bling Salon in Pflugerville. Letitia has adjusted to her new salon due to the fact that there is a pleasant but yet professional environment. Moreover, Letitia is very hopeful that Bling Salon will continue to be one of the best salons in Pflugerville because of the good services offered to the customers. In addition, Letitia believes that Bling Salon will continue to grow because of the new arrivals to the city of Pflugerville who will hopefully choose to spend their "dollars" on the local level in Pflugerville instead of going to Austin or Round Rock.

According to Letitia, Bling Salon is one of the best hair salons in Pflugerville due to the fact that all of the stylists are very knowledgeable in the domain of hair maintenance and also very innovative in inventing new hair trends. Moreover, Letitia is confident that Bling Salon will continue to flourish because they have a high degree of quality services for their clientele. Not only does Bling Salon specialize in hair maintenance but, it also provides consultative treatment of one's hair. According to Letitia, an individual should at least come into the salon for about two weeks to conduct maintenance procedures. Also, Bling Salon provides fresh and modern trends of hairstyle.

Black Advocacy Group Says: 'Turn Off FOX'

Special to the NNPA from the Afro-American Newspapers

ColorOfChange.org, the community activist group that successfully urged dozens of advertisers to pull away from Glenn Beck's FOX news show, recently announced a new initiative directed at discouraging public establishments across the country from airing FNC. The campaign, dubbed "Turn off Fox," attempts to expose what the group's leaders call, "divisive rhetoric and dishonest smear campaigns" while reducing the number of TVs broadcasting the network in public venues like airports and gyms.

Colorofchange.org began a phone and online campaign to its more than 600,000 members asking businesses and other public establishments not to be a "conduit for the race-baiting and distortions put forth by Fox News Channel."

"The case against Fox News Channel is easy to



make - no legitimate news organization consistently wages smear campaigns based on lies and race-baiting," said James Rucker, executive director of ColorOfChange.org, in a press release. "But for years, Fox News Channel has done

exactly that, and the pattern has only gotten worse since President Obama entered the White House. Our campaign gives people a way to demand that businesses that serve the public not force Fox News's divisive propaganda on their customers."

(GIN) - Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has made Europe an offer he thinks they can't refuse. For \$6.3 billion yearly, Libya will stop illegal African immigration and help avoid "a black Europe."

Speaking on a visit to

Italy, Col. Gaddafi said Europe "could turn into Africa" as "there are millions of Africans who want to come in". Speaking at a ceremony in Rome on Monday, Gaddafi warned the audience that "Tomorrow Europe might no longer be European. It

The African Diaspors Section

By Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

Hope of a Brighter Future in Guinea

By Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

On September 19, 2010 the nation of Guinea is set to vote on the second round of elections, which will determine the new president of Guinea. Moreover, the people will for the first time, choose freely between Alpha Conde and Cellou Diallo who both have different views on how to bring back peace to the country. The next president of Guinea will have a lot of challenges to overcome before the nation of Guinea can prosper. For instance, the next president will have to deal with the subject of reforming the armed services; corruption; and finding ways on how best to exploit the vast natural resources, so that they will benefit the people of Guinea, rather than, international corporations. We need to better understand the stake of this election for the people of Guinea and its Diaspora living in Central Texas.

In 1952, Guinea gains its independence from France, making it the first French West African colony to gain its freedom. After its independence, Guinea had "thorny" relationships with France which led to the diplomatic and economical isolation of Guinea from Western nations. In 1984, the first president of Guinea died, which caused Lassana Conte a military general to seize the power. Then in 1990, the military adopted a new constitution that was supposed to lead to multi-party elections. Although the new constitution was to lead to free elections, it never did because

Lassana Conte "rigged" the elections to maintain his power. After the death of Lassana Conte, the army moved quickly to fill the vacuum of leadership, in which Captain Dadis Camara became the new president of Guinea.

Then, Captain Dadis promised the people of Guinea and its Diaspora to organize free and fair democratic elections, in which, he will not be a candidate. However, Captain Dadis changed his mind and sought to insert himself as one of the candidates. Moreover, this caused the people and other parts of the military to demonstrate against this idea. In December 2009, Captain Dadis was shot in the head, but managed to survive. Due to his hospitalization, new military rulers were chosen to lead the country. Moreover, these new rulers agreed to set up elections on June 27, 2010. The recent election of June 27, 2010 narrowed down the field to two candidates, which are Alpha Conde and Cellou Diallo.

Now the people will have to choose between Alpha Conde who is a veteran opposition leader or Cellou Diallo, the former Prime Minister. Alpha Conde and Cellou Diallo each have different pathways to the presidency, but either will have to make tough decisions if elected. The next president will have to be able to work with other political party in order to get Guinea out of massive fiscal debt and

poverty. Although Guinea is full of natural resources, it is one of the poorest nations in the world. Consequently, the new president will have to find ways to use the vast resources of diamond, gold, bauxite, and iron ore to benefit the people, rather than foreign companies that exploit these resources. In other words, the next president must be able to lift millions of his citizens out of poverty by providing good paying jobs. Since Guinea has suffered economically and politically, a large number of people have fled the country in search of new opportunities. Consequently, some people of Guinea have settled in the US and especially Central Texas.

The Guinean nationals who fled their poverty stricken country have resettled in big cities like New York, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston and Austin. Numerous Guinean nationals have chosen Central Texas due to its diverse economy. Some have opened up their own businesses, while others have found employment in various fields in Central Texas. Moreover, they are looking forward to the election because they strongly believe that it will produce a president that will address the issue of the lack of job opportunities in Guinea. Furthermore, some of them are willing to go back to their native land after the election due to the fact it would mark a new beginning for their nation.

Rwanda Up in Arms Over Leaked 'Genocide' Report

Special to the NNPA from GIN



A picture taken on June 27, 1994 shows French soldiers on patrol passing by ethnic Hutu troops from the Rwandan government forces near Gisenyie, about 10kms from the border with Zaire. France played an active role in the 1994 Rwanda genocide, a report unveiled Tuesday by the Rwandan government said, naming French political and military officials it says should be prosecuted. (AFP/File/Pascal Guyot)

(GIN) - Rwandan President Paul Kagame is said to be fuming over a leaked U.N. report that ties him to the massacres of Hutu men, women, children and the elderly. The massive 600-page "mapping" report, prepared for the UN but leaked to Le Monde, a French newspaper, says that after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, Tutsi-led Rwandan troops and their rebel allies targeted, chased, hacked, shot and burned Hutus in the Democratic Republic of Congo, from 1996 to 1997. "The majority of the victims were children, women, elderly people and the sick, who were

often undernourished and posed no threat to the attacking forces," notes the report which suggests these killings could be considered "crimes against humanity, war crimes, or even genocide."

Rwandese Minister of Justice Tharcisse Karagurama called the report "worthless." The report flies in the face of strong European and U.S. support for the Rwandan president and challenges the narrative that only Rwandan Tutsis were genocide victims. Govt spokesman Ben Rutisinga attacked the investigators for "failing to consult with Rwanda even though

they found time to meet with over 200 non-governmental representatives."

But Luc Cote, the Canadian war crimes prosecutor who headed the 34-member UN probe, countered: "All this [evidence] put together, submitted to a court of law, may constitute elements from which you can infer the intent to destroy a group as such, which is genocide." "It is never too late for justice," says Siphon Mthathi, Human Rights Watch director in South Africa. "It is unfortunate that the report has taken this long but we hope now it can be acted upon."

Gaddafi Offers to Save Europe From Turning Back

Special to the NNPA from GIN

(GIN) - Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has made Europe an offer he thinks they can't refuse. For \$6.3 billion yearly, Libya will stop illegal African immigration and help avoid "a black Europe."

Speaking on a visit to

Italy, Col. Gaddafi said Europe "could turn into Africa" as "there are millions of Africans who want to come in". Speaking at a ceremony in Rome on Monday, Gaddafi warned the audience that "Tomorrow Europe might no longer be European. It

may even be Black!" He continued: "We don't know if Europe will remain an advanced and united continent or if it will be destroyed, as happened with the barbarian invasions." "We don't know what will happen, what will be the re-

action of the white and Christian Europeans faced with this influx of Africans," the Libyan leader warned. Col. Gaddafi has in recent months been championing the idea of a United States of Africa long and has hosted many summits with African

leaders. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi had no immediate comment on Col. Gaddafi's demand.



Fear, Exclusion Prevent Haitian-Americans from Voting

By Cyril Josh Barker

Special to the NNPA from the Amsterdam News (NNPA) - As Wyclef Jean continues to criticize the Haitian government for not allowing him to run for president, questions are being raised about the Haitian government's attitude toward Haitians not living in the country.

Unlike in the United States, Haitians who aren't living in their country at the time of an election are not able to vote. There's no system set up to submit a votes from another country. This is due to the stigma that spending time away from the country leads the Haitian government to give the label of those not in the country as uninformed. "Haiti has gone through a lot of changes since the over-

throw of the old government," said Haitian-American and political candidate Rodneyse Bichotte. "The constitution was revamped, and it takes time for a country such as Haiti, which has been under in dictatorship so many years, to grab the meaning of democracy."

Involving herself in American politics, Bichotte is running for state committee leader of the 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn, which has the largest number of Haitian immigrants in the state. None of those living in the district can vote in Haiti's presidential election.

"If you look or sound American with Haitian roots, then you are not invited," she said. "Sometimes, people get backlash for being away so

long. I'm not sure why they make it so difficult."

But along with the stigma that Haiti has against those not living in the country, many also fear being involved in Haitian politics at all because of the history of corruption.

Bichotte said, "Some people are afraid and they feel that anything having to do with Haitian politics is bad karma. Having that sense of independence seems unreachable, but everyone wants the best for the country."

Haiti was supposed to hold an election this February, but it was postponed due to the January earthquake. Elections in Haiti will be held in November with 38 candidates running for president of the country.

National CASA Association Announces Partnership with R&B Recording Artist Anthony Hamilton



Anthony Hamilton

SEATTLE, August 30, 2010 - The National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association recently announced that GRAMMY Award-winning R&B recording artist Anthony Hamilton will serve as a national spokesman for the organization.

Through the use of a second PSA, Hamilton will work diligently to recruit African American male volunteers for the national non-profit organization. He will

also represent CASA at national child welfare conferences and events around the country to raise awareness of the growing number of African American children in the foster care system.

David Soukup, a Seattle Superior Court Judge, developed the CASA concept in 1977, after becoming concerned about making decisions on behalf of abused and neglected children without enough information. He conceived the idea of appointing

community volunteers to speak up for the best interests of these children in court.

Today, there are more than 70,000 CASA volunteers who advocate for more than 230,000 children in the foster care system. These caring adults serve as fact-finders for judges by thoroughly researching the background of assigned cases and ensuring that they are brought to a swift and appropriate conclusion. In the United States, more than 152,000 African American children are in the child welfare system, with boys representing more than half of the children in foster care; yet there are only 8,400 African American CASA volunteers. "We are honored and excited that Anthony Hamilton will serve as one of our national spokesmen," stated Michael Piraino, chief executive officer of the National CASA Association. "His passion and dedication for children will go a long way to help us recruit much needed African American male volunteers."

Hamilton will work alongside Judge Glenda Hatchett, who has been a national spokeswoman for CASA for the past seven years, to raise awareness of the organization and to recruit volunteers.

"Our boys need positive role models," noted Hamilton. "Becoming a part of CASA will provide me with an opportunity to reach out to those men who can become everyday heroes to these children, and help change their life of hurt, into one of hope." A native of Charlotte, N.C., Hamilton first discovered his musical talents at the age of 10 while singing in his church choir. In 2002, Hamilton received his career-molding break when he collaborated with the Nappy Roots on "Po' Folks." That performance earned the singer his first GRAMMY nomination for best rap/sung collaboration and a new label, legendary music producer Jermaine Dupri's So Def imprint. A year later, Hamilton's platinum debut "Coming From Where I'm From" was released, followed by the gold-certified "Ain't Nobody Worryin'" (2005).

Domestic Violence Victims Urged to Break Silence



State Sen. LeAnna Washington, left, and Sheila Armstrong are spreading the message to domestic violence victims that they do not have to take the abuse. PHOTO Abdul Sulayman/ Philadelphia Tribune

By Larry Miller
Special to the NNPA from the Philadelphia Tribune

(NNPA) - Survivors of domestic abuse will readily say it's never irrelevant to discuss its causes or to let those who suffer know that they don't have to take it. It's never irrelevant to let those who have been battered, beaten and abused know they do have options.

"I never could have imagined that this was going to happen to me," said Sheila Armstrong, a survivor of domestic violence. "No one thinks that it can happen to them, but it can. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence."

According to experts on the issue, domestic violence is a problem that affects every strata of American society regardless of race, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation or economic and educational background.

Research by the United States Department of Justice shows that domestic violence covers a range of criminal acts, including intimate partner violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual abuse.

Experts and survivors suggest no one ever thinks they might become a victim of domestic violence. Compounding the problem is that some victims don't want to admit they are in an abusive relationship, while others are afraid to seek help and suffer in silence.

And suffering in silence is the last thing the victim should do, because according to law enforcement authorities, domestic violence all too often turns deadly.

Armstrong was brutally beaten by her son's father, right in front of the boy, who was 2 years old at the time. She said they had a normal relationship until she started talking about going back to school.

That's when he started tracking her every movement, making it difficult for her to

hold down a job by turning off the alarm clock, or sabotaging the car so it wouldn't start. She said she started pulling away, little by little until, in 2003 she informed him she was leaving. "In 2003 I was assaulted by my son's father," Armstrong said, fighting back tears. "Before that we had arguments, like any other couple, but it never amounted to much. It wasn't until I told him I was going to leave him that it escalated. He told me, 'You're not going anywhere. I'll kill you before I let you go' and he tried. He hit me and punched me. I fought back, hitting him in the nose. That's when he picked up a vacuum cleaner and attacked me. I woke up in the hospital with a broken arm and other injuries. I went from the hospital into an emergency shelter run by Women Against Abuse."

Armstrong said in retrospect she saw the signs that there would be violence in her relationship long before it happened.

"Everything became an argument. Eventually I felt like I was being held hostage in my own home," she said. "The last time I saw my son's father was in 2004. I still have problems trusting people; I won't let someone get too close. I'm still in counseling and so is my son. What he witnessed has affected his speech. He's 9 years old now and has emotional problems. For a long time after he saw me beaten, he wouldn't talk."

According to reports and research by the Justice Department and groups like Women in Transition, Women Against Abuse and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, domestic violence often becomes accepted by the victim for many reasons, cultural, economic or because the victim may have children with the abuser.

"Keep in mind that intimate partner abuse is about

control. The abuser often convinces the victim that it's their fault. Sometimes the victims convince themselves that the abuser will change. The pattern of violence is not about fear, it's about exercising power and control," said Peg Dierkers, executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence in a previous interview.

Experts and surviving victims said once the violence starts it always escalates. Victims report that the verbal and physical abuse spirals downward into an abyss that mentally, spiritually and sometimes physically, imprisons the victim.

That's what happened to State Sen. LeAnna Washington, herself a survivor of domestic violence.

Like too many victims across the city and the nation, Washington said she never saw the darker side of her husband until they were living in the same house — and then it was too late.

"In Pennsylvania at least 91,999 people received services from the various agencies and domestic violence programs," Washington said. "In Philadelphia over 12,000 victims received some kind of services. But these numbers are just the ones that were reported. There are many thousands who are suffering in silence."

Although statistics show that anyone, male or female can be brutalized by domestic violence, women are the most likely victims and children are the most seriously affected. Statistics also show that African-American women are even more likely to have suffered violence at the hands of an intimate partner and that homicide is the leading cause of death among young African-American women.

So far, for 2010 there have been 27 deaths in Philadelphia linked to domestic violence.

It's Easy to Sign Up for Free or Reduced-Price School Meals

Austin School officials remind parents that it's easy to sign up for free or reduced price meals — breakfast and lunch — for their children. Who is eligible?

- Children of all ages — from tots to teens — whose household income is at or below the criteria levels shown on the application.

- Foster children who are the legal responsibility of a welfare agency or court regardless of the income of the household with whom they reside.

- Migrant and homeless children.

Applications for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program will be sent to all student households and are available at every Austin school.

To apply, households must fill out the application — only one application per

family is needed — and return it to the school. An adult household member must sign the application, and applications may be submitted at any time during the school year. Assistance is also available for completing the application. Food Services Director Chris Carrillo-Spano encouraged eligible parents to apply. "Every child goes through the cafeteria lines in the same manner, whether they are paying full price, the reduced price, or receiving meals for free. Confidentiality is assured," she said. Ms. Carrillo-Spano reminds parents that a new application for free or reduced meals is required each year. Students are allowed to receive meal benefits based on last year's (2009-2010) meal application only until October 4, 2010. Since processing takes time, parents should

not delay in completing an application for this school year, she said.

For more information about free or reduced price meals, parents should call AISD Food Services at 414-0251.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced-price meal policy, AISD Nutrition and Food Services staff will review applications and determine eligibility.

Parents or guardians dissatisfied with the ruling of the official may wish to discuss the decision with the reviewing official on an informal basis. Parents wishing to make a formal appeal for a hearing on the decision may make a request either orally or in writing to: Chris Carrillo-Spano Nutrition and Food Services Director 3908 Avenue B, #212 Austin TX 78751.

EMPLOYMENT/BIDS/ PROPOSALS / PUBLIC INFORMATION/ FOR SALE /FOR RENT/MISC

Employment

Austin Community College

New Jobs for the Week of 09/06/10

Technician, Senior Computer Lab Support Northridge Campus MON - FRI, 8 AM - 5 PM \$3,023-\$3,779/Monthly Job #1006056
Assistant, Lab - Fire Academy Taylor Fire Academy MON - FRI, 8 AM - 5 PM \$2,239 - \$2,557/Monthly Job #1008039
Assistant, Evaluation Highland Business Center MON - FRI, 8 AM - 5 PM \$2,487-\$3,109/Monthly Job #1008040
Specialist I, Web Development - Part-Time (50%) Cypress Creek Campus MON - FRI, 20 hours per week, as assigned. \$1,587-\$1,984/Monthly Job #1008046
Specialist, Recruiting/Advising (Bilingual: -English-Spanish) Highland Business Center MON - FRI, 8 AM - 5 PM 2,879-\$3,599/Monthly Job #1008048
Faculty, Vocational Nursing Job #1008034
Salary is assigned according to the Full-Time Faculty Salary Scale
Hours as assigned. Eastview Campus

Apply at HR

5930 Middle Fiskville Rd. 6th Floor, Austin, TX 78752
Job Line (512) 223-5621
http://www.austince.edu
EEO/AA/M/F/D/V

T. J. Lambrecht Construction, Inc. A Heavy/Highway Contractor, currently working on the SH130 Project is accepting applications for Haul Truck Driver/Lowboy Driver. Requirements include current CDL with double & triple endorsements.

Apply in person Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM., 2405 Old Fentress Rd. Lockhart, TX 78644 . (512) 620-0908 "An Equal Opportunity Employer"

JANITORIAL WORKERS NEEDED

ISS Facility Services, Inc. has openings for supervisory, floor men, and general cleaners for part-time evening employment. Apply at ISS Facility Services, Inc. Austin, M-F, between 4-6 pm, 8101 Cameron Road # 304. ISS Facility Services, Inc. is an Equal opportunity Employer (EOE) and promotes a Diverse Workforce.

Financing Options for Your Business Workshop (9/15/2010)

Visit the SBDP Classes and Events section of the website www.austinsmallbiz.org or call 974-7800 to register. Access to capital is vital to sustaining all businesses through good times and bad. We encourage business owners to understand the concept of alternative financing and to be creative in seeking out those sources.

This course will introduce you to financing alternatives and suggestions on negotiating terms and conditions that are most favorable to the business venture. This class is taught by a University of Texas Adjunct Instructor.

Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Location: The Clarion Inn & Suites, 2200 IH35 S, Exit 232A For Information: 512-974-7800 To Register: 512-974-7800

Villager Sportsville

Lanier Vikings face loss as Elgin comes to town



By George Hardin
SportsBeat

The Lanier High Vikings made a huge effort but were unable to overcome an assault by the Elgin Wildcats, losing 49-37 in the game at Nelson Field.

With both teams coming out strong the Vikings and the Wildcats both scored early in the first quarter. Lanier hit pay dirt when Justin Johnson, a senior running back, made a 75-yard run for a touchdown. Darwin Rios added the kick. Moments later Elgin's Darick Nolan rushed for a 17-yard touchdown, with the extra point added by Dalton Kiasmore. With about five minutes left in the first period Marquis Campbell scored on a 31-yard pass from Dylan Scott.

Kiasmore again was successful with the kick, putting the game at 14-7 in the Wildcats' favor as the first period ended.

Dylan Scott, the senior quarterback, kept the ball and made a three-yard touchdown run for Elgin with about six minutes left in the second quarter. Kiasmore's toe was accurate again. Lanier countered as Marc LeBlanc ran into the end zone on a 43-yard pass from Kalan Britton. Rios kicked the PAT through the uprights. Bouncing back, the Wildcats' Scott rushed for 21 yards, followed by Kiasmore's extra point. As the teams broke for halftime Elgin was out front 28-14.

About 8:52 in the third Nolan rushed ahead for two yards to give Elgin another 6 points; Kiasmore's extra point made it 35-14 in Elgin's favor. Lanier's Rios kicked a 38-yard field goal with about three minutes to go in the third. Charlestin Matthews ran for 12 yards to score for the Wildcats. Lanier's LeBlanc carried the ball for 22 yards with about a minute remaining in the third; Rios connected on the kick.

Dre Dorsey pushed up the score for Elgin with a 16-yard run for the Wildcats' touchdown of the game. LeBlanc then made two touchdowns for Lanier, both on passes from Britton, as the team rallied in the fourth. One was a 67-yard pass, the other for 34 yards. Rios was successful on the first kick but failed on the second.

"We've been starting to put some things together," said Danny Lauve, head coach at Elgin. "We knew we had to control the ball.

Lanier has some great athletes. Coach (Odis) Jones has done a super job with that program. Anytime we can come over here and walk away with a victory we're happy with that."

Lauve is in his fourth year at Elgin. Elgin had 25 first downs compared to 14 for Lanier. And the Wildcats passed for 163 yards versus 251 for the Vikings.

Elgin was listed with 38 rushes for 396 yards, while Lanier posted 25 for 154. The Wildcats are scheduled to play at Taylor, Friday, Sept. 10.

Odis Jones, head coach



Lanier's Justin Johnson dodges defenders as a teammate takes down an opponent from Elgin in the foreground. Johnson, a senior running back/defensive back, ran for 552 yards in the 2009 season. Photo by George E. Hardin

and athletic coordinator at Lanier, said, "In the first half we had mistakes on defense that really hurt us in the game. Then we started getting in the groove on offense, started moving the ball. Defensively, we've got some personnel

changes we need to make, but I feel confident we're going to get better every week. I feel confident in our team and making a run in the district." He said as the result of district realignments Eastside Memorial has been added to

the Lanier schedule. Other than that, he said, the changes will not be major.

Jones has been at Lanier 12 years and head coach for three. The Vikings are scheduled to play Gonzales Friday, Sept. 10.

Prairie View gains victory over TSU in 'Classic' game

By George Hardin
SportsBeat

The Prairie View A&M Panthers were able to claim a 16-14 victory over Texas Southern University Sunday, Sept. 5, at Houston's Reliant Stadium. A crowd of 22,062 was in attendance at the Labor Day Classic as the Southwestern Athletic Conference champions eased past the hometown team. It was the Panthers' fourth victory in a row over the Tigers and the sixth win over TSU in seven years. The classic was being played for its 26th year.

Prairie View was aided by a record four interceptions, one of which was returned for a touchdown, but was hampered by the absence of quarterback K. J. Black, the reigning SWAC offensive player of the year. Black is recovering after having knee surgery. Offensively, the Panthers were able to get only 148 yards rushing and passing against a tough TSU defense. Prairie View hit the boards to gain the game's first score early in the second quarter as

wideout Shaun Stephens raced for a 20-yard touchdown on a pass from Jonathan Troast. The Tigers had 167 rushing yards.

One of the huge plays for Prairie View was when linebacker Marcus White grabbed an interception and ran 72 yards for pay dirt with about five minutes remaining in the third period. Moments later Prairie View linebacker Raheem Cardwell grabbed TSU running back Joseph Warren in the end zone for a

safety, giving the Panthers a 16-7 lead. It was the first outing for Panthers' head coach Henry Frazier III since he won the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award, named after the longtime head coach at Grambling State University. Frazier was the first coach from a historically black school to win the honor.

(This story uses information from Ryan McGinty, assistant sports information director at Prairie View A&M University.)

Cowboys Roll With Pair Of Eights Up Their Sleeve

Nick Eatman - DallasCowboys.com Staff Writer

IRVING, Texas - Every year there is a wild card to the season.

You know, that one factor that seemingly will make or break the year. It can go either way, based solely on the production of one player or position.

This year is no different. The Cowboys have a wild card for the 2010 season. In fact, they've got two of them.

It's not the Ace or the King, but rather an 8. In fact, the Cowboys have two 8s up their sleeve heading into Sunday's game against the Redskins.

That's right, Dez Bryant, sporting the No. 88 that Drew Pearson and Michael Irvin made famous, is hands-down a difference maker for this offense and a player who can legitimately

take this team to the next level.

OK, so he hasn't played a down yet. Yeah, but that's my point. That's actually working in the Cowboys' favor come Sunday night.

Can this kid play? Yeah, he can. I think we all know that. And we all should know by now that he's got an unbelievable talent that is about to be unleashed at FedExField in prime-time for all of the world

to see.

But only the Cowboys' coaching staff really knows what Bryant can and will be able to do contribution-wise in the game. And that certainly helps the Cowboys, if anything to offset their own uncertainties about the Redskins, with their new coaching staff and defensive schemes.

And that's going to be a challenge in itself for guys like Jason Garrett and the rest of the offensive coaches, who are hoping to find enough from Washington's preseason games to figure out its new 3-4 scheme

Sure, you know the concepts of what the Redskins will try to do, but we all know you can't tell much by the preseason. Yes, other teams are "vanilla" too when the games don't count.

But at least they've got another weapon to unleash as well. And let's face it, Bryant is a weapon. I know we've all said there are question marks that surround rookies, and I'm not here to disagree with the notion. I've said for months now, even last week, we still don't know what Bryant is going to do when he steps on the field. No, we don't. But from the looks of things, I get the feeling he's got about three options: Pretty good, Really Good or ... Are You Serious?

Something tells me we're going to get the latter. That when Dez gets out there on the field, he's going to make some phenomenal play right off the bat. In fact, I'm getting this feeling Bryant scores the first touchdown of the season for the Cowboys. Not sure where that's coming from, but sometimes you just get a



Henry Frazier III

hunch. I get about five every game and I rarely hit on one or two of them, but you never know.

Bryant has "instant-impact" written all over him and I agreed 100 percent with Wade Phillips on Monday when he said some guys just have a way of figuring it out when the lights come on. Wade thinks Dez is that type of player, and so do I.

And I know the fans are excited, not only to get this season started in general, but to see the Cowboys' first-round draft pick. We saw him for a week in training camp. It felt like a lot of fans were there in San Antonio, and they loved him. But it was still just a very small sample-size of this ever-strong Cowboys Nation.

Most of you guys really haven't seen the real Dez Bryant yet. And neither have the Redskins. What he will bring to this offense is juice. Miles Austin brought some last year, but for the most part, the offense had receivers closer to the "possession" side than the "speed" side.

Bryant steps into an of-

fense and virtually replaces Patrick Crayton. What the Cowboys will lose in experience, craftiness and a unique connection with the starting quarterback, they're going to add a lot more.

Bryant is faster, quicker, more explosive, more aggressive in tight coverage and, I never thought I'd be saying this, but better hands, too. Crayton always had the best hands on the team but I think Dez has better hands.

I know what you're thinking. "Hey, this kid hasn't even played a snap. Let's not put him in the Ring of Honor before his first reception."

Yeah, I know. And those who think that way, you're right. We should be patient with Bryant, who undoubtedly will have some ups and downs this year. But I think those downs will probably be injury-related if anything.

Because when he plays, he's going to be great. You guys just haven't seen it yet. And neither have the Redskins, which makes him the real wild card for this week.

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