



African-American Voice

DECEMBER 1999 PMB 145, 2920 S. Grand Blvd. Spokane WA 99203-2530 (509) 455-8274 rlloyd@cet.com Volume 4 Number 7

The caged bird sings

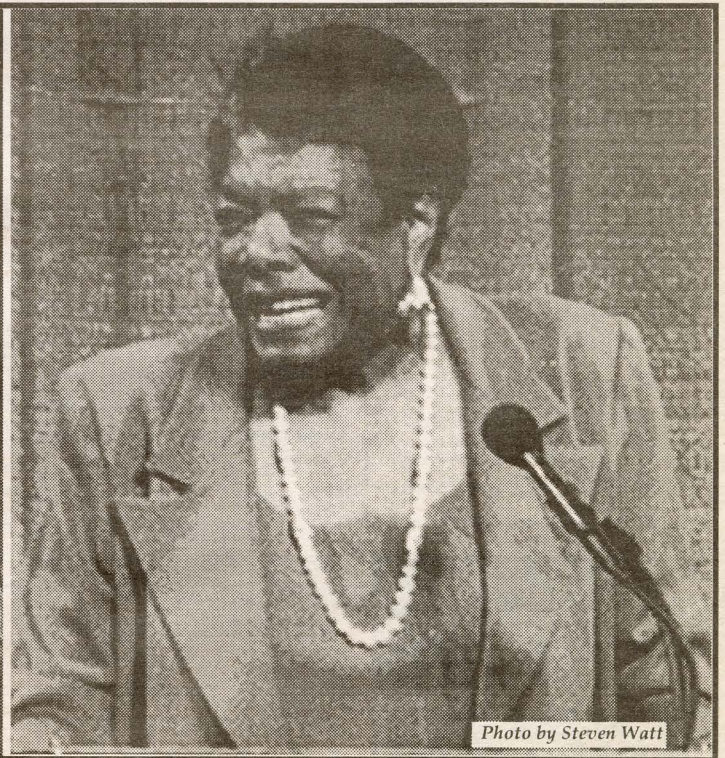


Photo by Steven Watt

A A Voice
 Awards three women
Elizabeth Williamson
Tanji Johnson
Cheryl NL Chi
 scholarships for luncheon with
Dr. Maya Angelou.
 Read their thoughts.

My Experience of Maya Angelou's Visit

BY ELIZABETH L. WILLIAMSON
AGE 12

On November 25, 1999 I had the opportunity to see Maya Angelou. I had heard of Dr. Angelou prior to her arrival and I was in the progress of reading her book "Why The Caged Bird Sings". I have always had an interest in poetry and from time to time I attempt to write a poem. I did not

know what to expect, but from the moment Dr. Angelou began to speak she had my full attention. She sang, told stories and recited some of her poetry. I had never in my life witnessed such a performance.

There were a lot of messages in what she said. The one message that stuck with me was that as a child she was told that she could not be a teacher but as an adult, she is like the singer she was meant to be, the teacher she was told she

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Touched emotionally, intellectually, and humorously

BY TANJI JOHNSON

*"When it look like the sun not shining anymore ...
You became my rainbow in the clouds."*

These were the first set of words that we would all cling to over the next half hour as the profound and phenomenal Dr. Maya Angelou began to speak. Inspiring and very personal, Dr. Angelou's presence was a blessing at the YWCA Women of Achievement Benefit Luncheon held at the Spokane Convention Center on 15 November .

In honoring the award recipients, Dr. Angelou related
Continued on page 9

If you already contributed thank you. If not please subscribe if you can.

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Will you trade this for a \$30 tab?

Leyli Woodfield gave this passionate testimony at a recent meeting of the Spokane Regional Health District Board where a list of possible cuts to the budget made necessary by the passage of Initiative 695 were being considered. When you voted for \$30 automobile license renewal tabs is this what you meant to happen?

Good Morning and thank you for giving me this time to speak. My name is Leyli Woodfield and I am a PHN

I have been a public health nurse for 9 years 1 month and 11 days and in that time I have worked with countless drug affected homeless, and very young victimized women. I have been to the jail and the detention center, to every downtown hotel in the city and under the bridge at Riverfront Park to find a pregnant woman who was reported to be living in a box -- she was.

I have been an out-spoken proponent against the impact of inadequate childcare in the light of welfare reform that places very young children in danger and at risk for abuse

and neglect from inadequate or inappropriate child care.

I have actively worked with and aggressively targeted the minority population who are either unwilling or unable to access services from a predominately white system. I am in their homes and neighborhoods -- they warn me now when I am in an area where gang related violence is expected to occur.

I go with them to doctor's offices, schools and W.I.C. I interpret confusing medical jargon, reassure and advocate for women who neither know when or how to advocate for themselves. I teach, I teach childcare, parenting, growth and development. I teach self-care, hair care, and assertiveness. And with the assis-

tance of the Vanessa Behan Crisis nursery I was the only PHN teaching cross-cultural parenting to women with biracial children.

I am there when they relapse, when they get busted for boosting, when they miscarry, when their child is found dead of SIDS and when DCFS has walked out taking their child whom they can't parent but love to the very best of their ability.

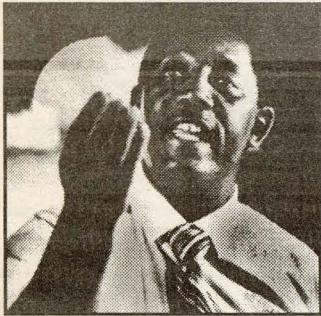
I am there on Thanksgiving and Christmas eve handing out food, vouchers and toys to women who have no transportation and families too big to go and stand in cold lines hoping to get whatever is left -- that is one of my traditions. My car is a diaper, clothing and formula bank on wheels, and I always manage to have just what they need when they need it.

Should the budget be approved and the cuts made, you the board needs to fully comprehend what potential impact it will have, not

Continued on page 17

CONTEST

Leaders we have known and admired



Who is this man?

Ask your parents, ask your teachers, ask a librarian, ask your community leaders. At the end of a year's issues, will you know the name of each leader?

Youth who write a short article for the history page earn \$25 if accepted for publication.

National Black group seeks to educate parents

By A. BRADLEY

"Mommy, where did all those brown people come from?" This was the reaction of a little girl in the lobby of the DoubleTree Hotel on the 10th of November. I thought, "Oh, the innocence of children." She was probably expressing the sentiment of a lot of people that day. While she could so easily verbalize it, other could only think it. The reason for the large influx of brown people into Spokane was the start of the National Coalition of Title 1/Chapter 1 Parents Conference.

After meeting and welcoming some members of the organization to Spokane, I was hot on the trail of a Mrs. Minnie Pearce, the chair person for the Coalition. She informed me that Title 1 was the largest federal assistance program to help meet the needs of children living in poverty. Title 1 was started in 1965. Initially, the Title 1 organization made it mandatory that parents be involved with the schools prior to

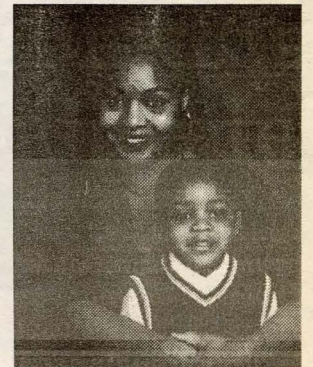
schools receiving Title 1 funds. In 1988 the program lost its mandate and parent involvement was no longer a requirement to receive funds. Presently, the criteria for receiving funds is that 50% of the students must be on the reduced lunch program. There are several schools in the area that are receiving funds from Title 1. Bemis and Longfellow Elementary have been nationally recognized as having excellent Title 1 programs.

This is the 26th anniversary of Title 1. It was founded in Washington DC in 1973 by William 'Bill' Anderson, along with 60 parents. There are only two original members who have been with the organization from the start. They are Mrs. Bobbie Green and Mr. Tommy William. The goal of Title 1 is to educate all parent on what they can do to insure their children are getting every opportunity for a successful education. Mrs. Pearce stated that we need parent involvement in all aspects of our children's educa-

tion, from classroom monitoring and assisting to fund raising and teacher hiring. Mrs. Pearce has a vision of all the key players within the structure of education being committed to excellence - from the parents and teachers to administrators and principals.

Title 1 has a training program for parents and serves about 11 million children in nearly 50,000 public schools across the country. Title 1 is made up of 10 districts and the organization was here in Spokane (District 10) to spark some interest in the association. So if you are interested in the program that flooded downtown Spokane with brown people or if you would like to have a voice in school programs funded by Title 1 please contact Mrs. Pearce at The National Parent Center 1541 14th Street, NW 1st Floor Washington, DC 20005 (202) 547-9286 Fax (202) 544-2813.

Carol Olsen is the Title 1 representative for District 81. She can be reached at 354-7308.



Marsha Jones and son

Marsha Jones Wins Pine State Athletic Club Scholarship

Marsha Jones, a student at Spokane Community College in the paralegal program, was recently awarded a \$500 scholarship by the Pine State Athletic Club. Marsha works part-time at the SCC Multi-Cultural Center and is the mother of a four year old son who is enrolled in the campus daycare. Marsha is a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

The Pine State Athletic Club was established in 1976 to use the sport of golf to involve the youth in the community and help them develop character; and to foster good relations between all types of people in the Spokane community.

NEW FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS

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• FAFB African American Club
• Unity House
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NAACP 80th Year Freedom Fund Banquet

By ROBERT LLOYD

Judge Franklin D. Burgess, US District Court judge, spoke on November 6 at the NAACP 80th Year Freedom Fund Banquet

"celebrating the past, savoring the present and steering the future." A graduate of Gonzaga University and the GU School of Law where he was all-American in basketball and class presi-

dent, he has friends and ties to Spokane over the years. Judge Burgess is involved with the Tacoma Boys Club, the Boy Scouts, the Urban League, Shiloh Baptist Church, and is a past president of the NAACP. Telling us not to take ourselves so seriously, the judge illustrated his point by reading a fictitious letter supposedly written by the mother of Eileen Thomas, Spokane NAACP president. There was much friendly bantering with the audience, which numbered over 270.

The Banquet committee, headed by V. Anne Smith, did a great job of turning the Sasquatch Room in Spokane Community College's Student Union Building into an elegant banquet room with striking table decorations.

Marlin Clark introduced the NAACP officers and honored guests and welcomed them to their seats on the dais. Awards

were given, including the "Living Legend" award to Lee Wade for her many years of work in the community, including the mentoring of Eileen Thomas!

Music was provided by soloists Elisha Mitchell, Aletha Everette, Darline Hardy, and Gerald Kennedy and Angels with Attitude performed. Onyx Theatre members Liz and Adell McAlpine gave readings for the past, present and future, and Rev. Lonnie Mitchell, Fr. John Spitzer, and Fr. Ken Beason gave prayers for the past, present and future. The Rev. Happy Watkins gave the invocation.

The move this year from a downtown hotel venue to the community college allowed for lower prices for the dinner tickets so more people could attend while still providing a boost to the Freedom Fund for local NAACP activities.

The Spokane, Pullman African-American Voice

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Spokane Delegation to Rally in Georgia

At least fifteen people from the Spokane area joined thousands from around the world to rally at the gates of Ft. Benning, Georgia and call for closure of the U.S. Army School of the Americas. Rallies were conducted by School of the Americas Watch on Saturday and Sunday, the 20th and 21st of November.

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane organized a delegation for the second year after having three of its members arrested at Ft. Benning in 1997. Paddy Inman, a teacher in the Mead School District was imprisoned for six months in 1998 for his part in that nonviolent demonstration. Inman heads SOA Watch NW and is a leader in the national movement to close the institution widely known as the School of Assassins.

In 1998, over 2000 activists, including six from Spokane, were detained by military authorities for allegedly entering Ft. Benning, an open military reservation, for political purposes. They were released without being charged. Over

10,000 opponents of the SOA were present this year, partly in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Jesuit massacre at the University of Central America in El Salvador which was ordered, coordinated and carried out by graduates of the School of Americas. Over 4,000 of these crossed into the base. they were not detained but driven off the base in buses.

The movement to close the SOA has gained strength among human rights activists and members of Congress, in large part, because of the activities of SOA Watch in Georgia and in Washington, D.C. The School is used exclusively for training Latin American officers, troops, and police and has been linked to most of the worst

atrocities in the Western Hemisphere over the past thirty years. Today, most of its graduates are from the militaries of Colombia and Mexico where there is large-scale repression against the poor and indigenous populations.

The Spokane delegation included a businessman, an attorney, a gardener, a college student, and several educators including Inman and father Michael Cook who will represent the Jesuits of Gonzaga University. The other delegates were Judy Butler, Doug Demeo, Sandi Evans, Robert Gilles, Bud Godderis, Steve Hanson, Teresa McCann, Nancy and Rusty Nelson, David Robison, Eric Robison, Jack Ross, John Traylor, John Voykin, Judy Winchel, Amber Waldref, Vanessa Waldref.

Spokane Task Force on Race Relations

VISION:

Our vision is "Spokane's Commitment to Action for Racial Equity".

MISSION:

The Spokane Task Force on Race Relations works towards the improvement of race relations and the elimination of racial injustice in the greater Spokane Community.

TFRR SOCIAL CHANGE STRATEGIES

1. EDUCATION:

- Finish products and process started at the 1998 CCRR.
- Support and endorse other's efforts (e.g. community cultural calendar).
- Improve the resource

packet and keep it up to date.

- Conduct a 3rd Community Congress on Race Relations.

2. LEADERSHIP

- Develop a system to encourage/support businesses and organizations that adopted/adopt the action statement.

- Continue the efforts to leverage community and organizational leaders that came out of the "Reality Check".

3. EXAMPLE:

- Conduct regular awareness training for ourselves (e.g. on "white privilege").
- Model the behaviors we advocate.

4. FUNDRAISING:

- Figure out how to raise money for our efforts.

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Arts and Culture

Book Review Black Man's Version to Exhale

REVIEWED
BY JOSE S. GUTIERREZ, JR.

"Girl, he's no good for you ... how long is he going to have your car --- just leave him." If these phrases sound familiar, it's probably because of the common claim that the lack of respect, responsibility and care of men has become prevalent in the downfall of many a relationship. But instead of saying all of that, women just call men "SCRUBS." Of course, in some situations, this is true. With the support of these contentions, by books and movies such as Terri McMillan's "Waiting to Exhale", released in 1995, many African-American men feel like they aren't being represented accurately in the media and other social arenas, but they had little opportunity for their sentiments to be heard.

In 1999, there is an equalizer of sorts. A self-published rookie author

out of Houston, Texas, Akie Davis, has released a fine piece of reading that details the drama that some men find themselves experiencing in relationships. *Black Man's Version to Exhale* leads the reader through numerous experiences of African-American relationships from a male's perspective. Also, it makes an effort to destroy the saying that "all men are dogs."

A no-brainer response to McMillan's top-selling novel, *Black Man's Version* paints a detailed, yet easily read portrait of the senseless and silly abuse that some people find themselves wound up in when in the pursuit of life, liberty and love.

Brothers are so often characterized and stigmatized as "playas" because of charisma and natural flare, but not all brothers comfortably fit into this undersized shoe of sorts, and Davis' book drops the knowledge on you.

In the midst of their pursuit of love, many of the characters find themselves attracted to women who are sometimes, but not always, openly out to take advantage of sincere men of status, generosity and self-confidence. And usually the men discover too little too late that the female was out to "get money", according to Junior Mafia.

An interesting point about the male characters is their consistent approach to these women. Often, the men would almost mindlessly approach a woman, and base their desire of her as a girlfriend/wife solely on looks. It's not a stretch for a man or woman to put the mack down based on looks alone, but as *Black Man's Version* displays, "all that glitters ain't gold."

When a situation like Tony's unfolds, the book becomes an experience more than reading. After meeting Linda and asking

her to dinner at his crib, Tony is like "yeeah" when she accepts his invitation. Now the inevitable --- he is stood up after slaving around the kitchen with burned out candles and ends up rapping with one of his homies into the wee hours of the morning about how he feels like the kid from "Mask." Tony later finds out that Linda, who gave him no notice and just dogged him, "had dinner with her mom, because they don't see each other often."

With good detail and writing *Black Man's Version* is sprinkled with similar tales of lesson-learning disappointment. If not an optimistic and morale boosting message, several tales like this could have Stone Cold Steve Austin wiping tears away.

Although the groundbreaking book follows the male characters and shares their thoughts with the reader, the book isn't meant to be an answer

resource for relationships nor a finger-pointing guide. "A lot of women aren't aware of what they're doing wrong in relationships, because most men don't express themselves," says Davis. "While many sisters are literally waiting to exhale, there are countless brothers out there who are just hoping to recover."

Black Man's Version, which is being released with a Hip-Hop soundtrack, in Davis' words is a times-up wake-up call to sisters who intentionally take advantage of brothers who try to make a relationship work. In the era of "Scrubs" and "Pigeons", Davis' work brings some insight not only to the African-American male-female relationship, but also raises issues relevant to all relationships, and avoids the simplistic and popularized blame game attitude.

Akie Davis is currently working on a screenplay and mastering the soundtrack to "Black Man's Version to Exhale."

Black Man's Version to Exhale is available through Fanon Productions at (713) 266-3855.

Young people's performance to present holiday showcase

The Box 'n Hat Players, Spokane Civic Theatre's young people's performance troupe, will present its annual holiday showcase on Sunday, December 12 at 7:00 p.m. on the theatre's

Main Stage.

This year's showcase, *North Pole Nonsense*, is written and directed by Jean Hardie, with musical direction by Gary Laing, and a special guest appearance by Kathie Doyle-Lipe as Dasher, the blue-collar reindeer.

The event is free and open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Box 'n Hat Players, an offshoot of the Spokane Civic Theatre School, has been a performing group in the Spokane area since 1985. Founders C.C. Cayer, Charla Dryburgh, and current director Jean Hardie started the troupe to give dedicated young people a performing outlet for their vocal, dance and dramatic talents. Over the past fifteen years, more than seventy talented young performers have been members of the Box 'n Hat Players; and the group has done countless performances in Spokane and the surrounding region, including Cheney,

Coeur d'Alene, Kettle Falls and the Tri-Cities. The group has performed at elementary schools, the local community centers, and several senior centers and nursing homes. Their show is a regular feature of the annual Family A-Fair at the Convention Center.

Each summer for the past several years, the Box 'n Hat Players have toured a show to the city and county libraries as part of Spokane's Kids Week celebration. Performing up to three shows a day, Christmas is another busy time for the group. The first Box 'n Hat Christmas Show was written and performed as a fundraising event for the Candlelighters Foundation, an event that was repeated several times over the next few years. Since then, Box 'n Hat has performed their Christmas shows throughout the area, including the Shiner's Hospital, Lion's Club children's parties, and Fairchild

Continued on page 14

Mayor Talbott, Paul Gray, Gary Livingston, and Brigadier General T.C. Jones What they have in common



pm - Superintendent of School District 81, Dr. Gary Livingston

- Saturday, Dec. 4 at 8 pm - 92nd Air Refueling Wing Commander, Brigadier General T.C. Jones

- Sunday, Dec. 5 at 2 pm - The Honorable John Talbott, Mayor of Spokane

These unique and fun collaborations are the creation of the Artistic Director of the Alberta Ballet, the company engaged by the Spokane Symphony for performances of *The Nutcracker*. Jean-Louis Le Roux will conduct the symphony. Tickets are \$16 to \$33 for adults and \$13 for children. Call the Spokane Symphony Ticket Office at (509) 624-1200.

Even though they are not known for their pirouettes, Mayor John Talbott, KZZU DJ Paul Gray, Superintendent Gary Livingston, and Brigadier General T.C. Jones will each play the role of "pasha, the Arabian King," at the different performances of *The Nutcracker*.

The Pasha will perform on the following dates and times:

- Friday, Dec. 3 at 8 pm - Paul Gray, KZZU FM
- Saturday, Dec. 4 at 2

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EVENTS

Nuncracker

Nov 19 - Dec 19 National community theatre premiere of the Nunsense Christmas Musical, Spokane Civic Theatre 1020 N Howard 325-1413

Scrooge

Nov 25 - Dec 3 A family musical, Spokane Children's Theatre, The MET 901 W Sprague, 328-4886.

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

Nov 26 - Dec 18 Spokane Interplayers Ensemble 174 S Howard 455-PLAY.

Nutcracker

Dec 3 - 5 Spokane Symphony & Alberta Ballet Spokane Opera House 624-1200.

Yuletide '99

Spokane Art School
Dec 3 - 5 Fri 10-8, Sat 10-6, Sun 12-5 Holiday Fine Arts and Fine Crafts Fair. Giftmaking and art projects for children.

Reading Stage

Equus Dec 5, You Can't Take It With You. Dec 12, Firth Chew Studio Theatre 1020 N Howard 325-1413

Spokane Youth Orchestra & Children's Chorus

Dec 5 Sun. 7 pm St. John's Cathedral 326-4442

Steel Magnolias Auditions

Dec 5 & 6 7 pm Firth J. Chew Studio Theatre.

Needed: 6 women, to appear 20's to 50's. Auditioners asked to read script. Script available for \$10 refundable deposit from Spokane Civic Theatre. 509-325-1413.

SFCC Jazz Ensemble Concert

Dec 8 Wed. 7:30 pm Spokane Falls Community College 3410 w Ft. George Wright Dr. Bldg. 15. 533-3720

The Good Doctor

Dec 9 -11 8 pm Spokane Falls Community College Playhouse Bldg 5 Ticket Info 533-3608 or 533-3592

Holiday Pops Christmas Concert

Dec 12 Sun. 2 pm Spokane Symphony & Chorale, with Spokane Area Children's Chorus, Spokane Opera House 624-1200.

The Toy Shelf

Dec 12 Sun. 2 pm & 7 pm Dance Theatre Northwest, The MET 901 W Sprague 922-3023.

A Ceremony of Carols Holiday Concert

Dec 17 Fri. 7:30 pm Spokane Area Children's Chorus with Leslie Stratton Norris, harp, Westminster Congregational Church 624-7992.

Kids' Concert, Winter Solstice Songs & Stories

Dec 18 Sat. 2 - 3 pm Capriccio and storyteller Phyllis Silver, Auntie's Bookstore 328-3729

Kwanzaa Celebration

Dec 27 Mon. East Central Community Center. Call 924-3490 for more information.

New Year's Eve Spectacular

Dec 31 Fri. Spokane Symphony & Spokane Jazz Orchestra, 9:30 pm - 1 am Ag Trade Center 624-1200.

Traditional New Year's Eve Dance

Dec 31 Fri. 9 pm - 12:30 am Spokane Folklore Society Contra Dance, Woman's Club Hall W 1428 9th 747-2640.

Blacks In Government

4th Thursday of the month regular membership meeting. Call 924-3490 for date and address of December meeting. Blacks In Government Conference 2000 will be May 31 - June 2 in Spokane.

Adolescent Support Group

Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27 5:30 - 7 pm Holy Family Hospital Call 325-8716

Breast Cancer Support Group

Dec 1 & 15 (1st & 3rd Wed) 5719 N Lidgerwood 325-8716

Cancer Support Group

Dec 8 & 22 Wed. 6 - 8 pm 5719 N Lidgerwood

Yuji Hiratsuka: Asian View/American Context
Through Dec 13 Jundt Art Museum, Gonzaga Univ.



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New Contest for Young Readers

Is there good news in the future? Will your life, or the lives of others improve? Will your family, community, or opportunities be better than today? We want to know what you think about the future.

The African American Voice (A.A.V.) is pleased to announce a new contest for young readers. All you have to do is write a paper telling why you are looking forward to the future and send it to the A.A.V. before the closing dates and you could win CASH!

Age is determined by entrant's age on December 1, 1999.

There will be four age groups, with a \$25 cash award for the winner in each group. The papers should be the following lengths.

Age	Length
9 - 10	200 - 300 words
1 - 12	300 - 350 words
3 - 14	350 - 400 words
15 - 16	400 - 450 words


All entries must include your NAME, ADDRESS, and DATE of BIRTH.

Mail entries to:
Future Contest
African American Voice
PMB 145 2920 S. Grand
Spokane, WA 99203-2530

Judging will be done by A.A.V. staff, based upon content and not on spelling or grammar, and all decisions are final.

All entries become the property of the A.A.V. and the writers and their parents/guardians agree that the A.A.V. is allowed to publish the winning entries in exchange for the cash awards they receive and that A.A.V. may also edit the entries as necessary to insure readability

The SPOKANE CIVIC THEATRE
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NUNCRACKER

by Dan Goggin
directed by Steven Bray

Nov. 19 - Dec. 19
Phone 325-2507 or 1-800-446-9576



Editorial

After we meet and eat

This month has been a month full of meeting and eating. We had the YWCA Women of Achievement luncheon, the NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet, The African Children's Choir and B.B. King came to town.

Why do we meet and eat?

The YWCA met to raise \$100 per salad from 2,000 people while Maya Angelou touched them emotionally, intellectually and humorously, but the bottom line was she raised \$200,000. Even if they paid her full fee of \$36,000 that's over \$160,000.

The NAACP had a \$30 buffet (and the food was cold by the time those last in line ate), the virtually free speaker Judge Burgess tickled our funny bones a little, community members entertained, and \$5,000 plus was spent to raise only \$11,500 for vaguely defined goals.

The African Children's Choir successfully presented their Christian philosophy, they professionally entertained their audience, and while the event was

free and they were housed with host families, they raised thousands of dollars in donations and sales of CD's and T-shirts to support thousands of orphaned East African children.

Pure entertainment, B.B. King packed the house, had them jumping in their seats, and raised thousands and thousands of dollars for the promoters and himself. He didn't promise you anything more and doesn't owe you anything more.

Somewhere here there is a message for my people. One of them is you get what you pay for and another is that people will pay for entertainment and for what they believe in. Only time will tell if they got value for their money.

Now we should watch non-profit organizations and hold them accountable. Will the YWCA's programs be as inclusive as the luncheon program and audience appeared to be? Will the NAACP live up to the goals of the national NAACP and its historical initiatives?

Robert Lloyd

Opinions

Support and use Roberta Greene

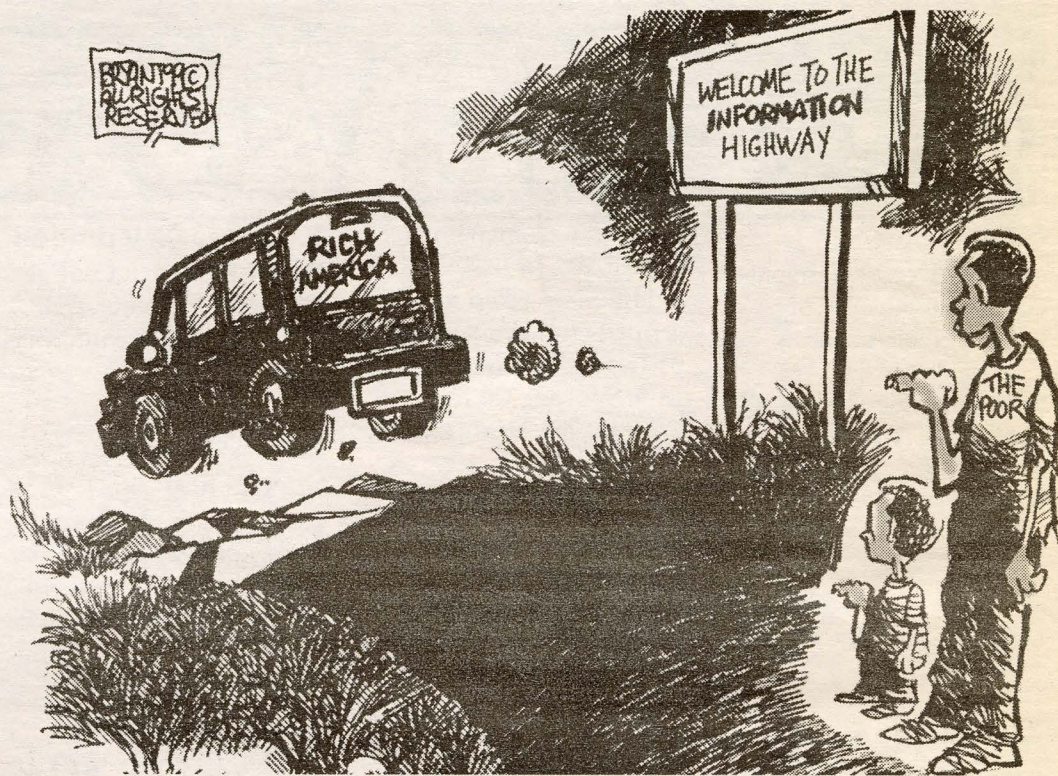
Roberta Greene, why don't you have backing from the African American community? I really can't answer that question but it seems to me that she is the token minority for the city to "show off", as if to say look how open minded we in Spokane are. But how diverse is it when the majority of her supporters are not of her ethnic background, so who is Roberta Greene really representing? Is she voicing concerns of the African American population? If you are like me, answering no, then you have one of two things to do: 1. Back her and get her to start raising issues that effect you. 2. Sit on your hands and hope for the best while you hold your breath, because you don't realize that she is your person on the inside. But then again, is she even knowledgeable as to what's going on in the African American community? Where was she for the NAACP Banquet? Perhaps enjoying herself at Whitworth's jazz concert? More likely, home in bed? Either way she was not present. Yes, that's correct, the only African

American on the city council not present for a big NAACP event, big enough for Q-6 News to send a camera crew by.

On my desk is a coffee mug with a "Far Side" cartoon upon it. The picture has chickens flopped all about, draped over fences appearing like a bunch of rubber chickens, and the caption says "Boneless Chicken Ranch". I wonder, is this where the city found Roberta Greene? I imagine her to be a spineless puppet for Spokane to (as mentioned before) show off the city's diversity. Without the support of her community (her backbone) how is she able to stand up and speak of the things that really matter to Spokane's African Americans?

My mother told me "Take advantage" yes that's right "Take advantage". So, why not use Roberta Greene to get your voice heard. That is what council members are there for. If you don't like her find some body else when election time comes up again. But until then "Take advantage".

Gezzah Belle



Taxicab Racism

BY EARL O. HUTCHINSON

I know the pain, rage and embarrassment that shook actor Danny Glover when five cab drivers recently refused to pick him up on a New York city street. A couple of years ago my wife, I and another African-American couple stood fuming on a mid-Manhattan street on a cold, windy evening in December as we watched empty cab after empty cab sail leisurely by ignoring our increasingly frantic signals for them pick us up. One cab driver glanced at us, waved us off, and then stopped a few feet in front of us to pick up a white couple. Finally out of desperation we asked our wives to stand on the corner while we ducked behind a corner building. They continued to furiously wave at cabs to stop. They had no better luck than we had. After nearly an hour futilely trying to get a driver's attention we trudged a few blocks through the cold and caught a bus. The other couple with us, both native New Yorkers, just shrugged and said that's the way it is with cabs here.

Thankfully Glover didn't shrug off taxicab racism. He filed a complaint and held a press conference to loudly protest his treatment. Glover's action once more tossed the ugly spotlight on cab driver racism as a big sore spot for thousands of blacks. New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and police officials immediately vowed to crack down on cab drivers that refuse to pick up blacks. The instant they put the

heat on, the drivers were on their best behavior. But why did it take officials so long to do something about cabby racism? And will it always take the racial mistreatment by cabbies of a black celebrity for officials to take action? The last time cab driver racism stirred any kind of response from officials was when former New York Mayor David Dinkins complained that cabs refused to pick him up. Even before Dinkins's public outcry made brief news, the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, that regulates they city's cabs, launched its own sting operation. The commission fingered a score of drivers who blatantly passed up black passengers to pick up whites.

Many cab drivers claim that screaming racism is too simple. They tell horror stories of drivers being beaten, robbed, assaulted and even murdered by passengers or thugs lurking in alleyways in black neighborhoods. While some drivers exaggerate or flat out lie about the danger to their physical safety as a cover to practice discrimination, their fears of violence are real and shouldn't be ignored. But this is no excuse for not picking up black passengers simply because they are black. Cab drivers have been preyed on by thugs of all colors, including whites. These assaults can and do occur in any and every part of a city. Yet cab drivers don't routinely refuse to pick up non-blacks on sight. Also what are the odds of a cab driver being mugged or murdered by

an African-American dressed in a business suit or a tailored outfit and carrying an attaché case? Yet many cab drivers routinely refuse to pick up nattily dressed black professionals on sight. A friend who briefly drove a cab in Los Angeles bitterly told me that everybody he knew in the business did everything they could not to pick up black guys.

Glover's experience along with mine and countless other African-Americans who are victimized by the racist practices of some taxi drivers, suggest there is much truth to his claim. Then those cab drivers are guilty of imposing a vicious system of on-the-street redlining that penalizes and criminalizes all African-Americans. They also deny the thousands of African-Americans who depend on cab service to get them to entertainment activities, airports, business engagements, or simply to get to their homes a crucial public transportation resource.

Cab driver associations say the answer to discrimination is better driver etiquette training. Glover says the answer is more multicultural diversity training. I say the answer is to keep doing what Giuliani did and nail cabbies who discriminate with tough penalties. The pity though is that it took a celebrity for that to happen.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is a nationally syndicated columnist and the director of the National Alliance for Positive Action. email:ehutchi344@aol.com.

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Continued from page 1
Why I want to see Maya Angelou

could not be, and the great poet she is and will always be. What this means to me is that I can be anything I want to be despite what people say I can not be. This was a great event and one that I will remember for the rest of my life. I would like to thank Mr. Bob Lloyd the publisher of the African American Voice for making the opportunity possible for me to attend such a great event.

TANJI JOHNSON

Fairchild Air Force Base

Maya Angelou has been the inspiration in my spiritual and ethnic growth as a young Black woman in today's society. Her influence has launched my initiative to explore the romance of self-discovery through constant reflection and the passionate search for who I am and the beauty that exists in my being. As an Air Force officer with immense responsibilities, it is easy to lose sight of everything that we have learned and been taught. A visit with the empowering Maya Angelou will serve as a rejuvenation for my soul and catalyst in

my ability to serve as a positive role model for black women everywhere, especially in the Air Force, where we are few and scarce.

Thank you for the opportunity to share!

CHERYL NL CHI
 EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY STUDENT

I was so excited to hear about Dr. Maya Angelou coming to speak. I first leaned about her speaking engagement and this scholarship when a woman at work let me read her October issue of the African American Voice. I immediately called the YWCA to see if there were student tickets. Sadly, there were none and \$100 is too steep for my college budget. That same day I mentioned her speaking engagement in one of my classes. Khalil Islam, who co-taught that class, noted that no one had applied for that scholarship and encouraged me to apply. That was three weeks ago. This past Friday, I again ran into Khalil and still no one had applied. Thus, I am writing to see if you will enable me to hear this powerful and inspirational woman.

I am still hesitant to

write because I am not African American. I am an Asian woman, but I hope my prose will be convincing enough. I hold a deep respect and admiration for Dr. Angelou. I am having difficulty finding the words to describe why I desire to hear her firsthand. She elicits such powerful emotions in me. She speaks truths that I and so many do not know how to voice. In the face of her ability to speak, I feel speechless. Strangely, I am usually a person to whom words come easily. Since Dr. Angelou delivers her words with such care and deliberation, I feel that anything I write about her or my relationship to her work should exercise that same thoughtfulness. I know I fall short of that high imperative. Yet, I am reminded by her life of the danger of strangling my words and so I speak about why I need to hear Dr. Angelou.

But more than my halting silence worries me. I wonder why not even one Africa American high school or college student wrote in. Surely they know who Dr. Maya Angelou is. Do they study her in school? Has no one bothered to introduce them to this woman who

has been an inspiration to me and countless others? Aren't they also drawn to hear her speak? And their loss of this opportunity reminds me of a previous lost opportunity.

I had the privilege of attending President Clinton's 1993 inauguration. Dr. Angelou read, On the Pulse of Morning, a poem she wrote especially for the occasion. I am embarrassed by the memory of my indifference to her words that cold January day. While the crowd, the cold, and my distance from the event distracted me from hearing well, I acknowledge that it was really my ignorance which kept me from experiencing the importance of her and her poem at the event. I did not understand the possibilities her presence and her poetry suggested. I have grown from that experience and may others. Since that time almost seven years ago, I have become a better woman and a feminist. Now, it is with more humility and eagerness that I desire to hear her again. I know what an honor it is to hear her speak, and what a gift she is to the world. Women like her have allowed me to dream and

expand my possibilities.

I am currently reading Audre Lorde's work *Sister Outsider* (1984). Her essay, "Poetry is Not a Luxury," reminds me in a different way of the significance of Dr. Angelou. Lorde succinctly and eloquently distills the importance of poetry for the lives of women. Poetry is a necessity. Both these women speak words which allow more women to speak and tell their truths. Their poems give women "the strength and courage to see, to feel, to speak, and to dare" (Lorde, 1984). These phenomenal Black women are empowering and I feel privileged to know them and myself through their words. They both are testament to the need to speak one's truth and the power that speaking has. And so I dare to share a little of mine.

Please enable me to hear Maya Angelou. I do not want to make the same mistake I made before. The gift of her presence and her words are rare. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

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African Children's Choir

Friends in the West

In 1982, Ray Barnett, an ordained minister, responded to God's call to visit war-ravaged Uganda. The aftermath of cruel dictators, Idi Amin and Milton Obote, had left the Ugandan people devastated and heartlessly abused. With a death toll in the thousands, countless orphaned children were left to fend for themselves.

Christians and their churches were especially battered. "I'll never forget the first day I met with a group of Christians in a little church in northern Uganda," recalls Barnett. "They were awestruck when I walked through the door. Just the day before, they pleaded with God to bring them an American who could help lift their heavy burden. Today, it still humbles me to think how I served as the answer to their prayer."

Yet the real answer to prayer was slow in coming. Ray returned to North America, determined to rally support to aid the hurting children, only to find his pleas falling on deaf ears. People back home simply couldn't understand the needs without traveling to Africa themselves.

Finally, God challenged Ray with a power-

ful idea. "Instead of going there, why not bring some of the children here?" So, in 1984, a team of volunteers traveled to Uganda, to select, train and finally obtain permission from government departments to bring 30 children back to North America. It would take a miracle - but God is in the miracle business.

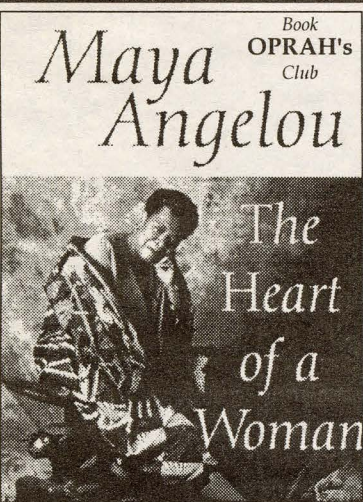
When the first African Children's Choir came to North America in 1984, they immediately stole the

hearts of everyone they met. Indeed, they communicated the need and funds began coming in to help children back home in Uganda.

Today, thousands of boys and girls in East Africa and other needy areas of the world receive the special care they need and deserve because Christians are responding to the choir's message. This outpouring of love results in hope and healing for the children. Joy is so evident on the choir children's faces.

[info@fitw.com]

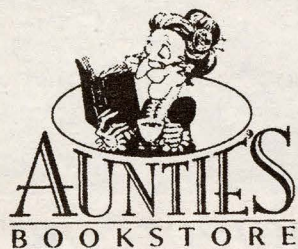
If you didn't see the African Children's Choir read the November 25 front page article in the Spokesman Review. Better yet buy the CD and hear them for yourself. After that buy a few CD's and give a gift of love to your friends.



Maya Angelou

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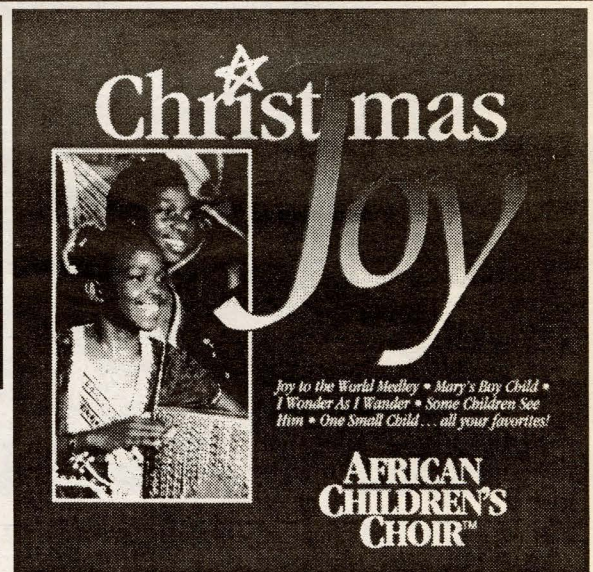


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10 Reasons to Dismantle the World Trade Organization

BY RUSSELL MOKHIBER AND ROBERT WEISSMAN

Add a new constituency to the long list of World Trade Organization (WTO) critics which already includes consumers, labor, environmentalists, human rights activists, fair trade groups, AIDS activists, animal protection organizations, those concerned with Third World development, religious communities, women's organizations. The latest set of critics includes WTO backers and even the WTO itself.

As the WTO faces crystallized global opposition -- to be manifested in massive street demonstrations and colorful protests in Seattle, where the WTO

will hold its Third Ministerial meeting from November 30 to December 3 -- the global trade agency and its strongest proponents veer between a shrill defensiveness and the much more effective strategy of admitting shortcomings and trumpeting the need for reform.

WTO critics now face a perilous moment. They must not be distracted by illusory or cosmetic reform proposals, nor by even more substantive proposals for changing the WTO -- should they ever emerge from the institution or its powerful rich country members. Instead, they should unite around an uncompromising demand to dismantle the WTO and its corporate-created rules.

Here are 10 reasons

why:

1. The WTO prioritizes trade and commercial considerations over all other values. WTO rules generally require domestic laws, rules and regulations designed to further worker, consumer, environmental, health, safety, human rights, animal protection or other non-commercial interests to be undertaken in the "least trade restrictive" fashion possible -- almost never is trade subordinated to these non-commercial concerns.

2. The WTO undermines democracy. Its rules drastically shrink the choices available to democratically controlled governments, with violations potentially punished with harsh penalties. The WTO actually touts this overrid-

ing of domestic decisions about how economies should be organized and corporations controlled. "Under WTO rules, once a commitment has been made to liberalize a sector of trade, it is difficult to

reverse," the WTO says in a paper on the benefits of the organization, which is published on its web site. "Quite often, governments use the WTO as a welcome external constraint on their

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Continued from page 1

Touched

stories about her adolescence and the people she gratefully recognizes as her "rainbows in the clouds" to the audience of hundreds of women and a handful of men. She reminded us that as we live, we must continue to seek out the bricklayers of that institution we call "Hope". Dr. Angelou challenges us to dare to be a rainbow in the clouds for all those that are to come, since our lives have already been paid for by those who graciously parted the waves of opportunity that currently exist. Her words were persuasive as she emphasized the importance of contributing back to one's community by promoting a positive environment for personal growth and development.

As I was touched emotionally, intellectually, and humorously, I looked around the enormous banquet room and found myself searching desperately for the enlightened faces of other young black women. I was eager to be assured that other black women were capturing this jewel of a role model in the palms of their hands.

Disappointed, as usual, I sat back and felt the heavy weight of my responsibility to share how a beautiful black woman had confronted the tragedies in her life and learned to exude into the essence of bliss. What a wonderful opportunity to be influenced by a celebrated "rainbow in the cloud" yet the African-American women in this forum were scarcely represented.

Granted, this was a benefit luncheon focused on all women and their valuable contributions, and we of all colors and ethnicities were extremely fortunate to welcome Dr. Angelou as the keynote speaker. But, I would prefer to have seen more black women encouraged by this experience with Maya Angelou.

So, why weren't more black women there? I feel confident that the publicity for Dr. Angelou's visit was apparent to most. Unfortunately, the minimum donation to attend the benefit luncheon was \$100; a great fundraiser for the YWCA, but a steep cost for most.

I thank the African-American Voice for spon-

soring my attendance at this luncheon and for the opportunity to once again, be inspired and rejuvenated by the Queen of her own Soul. I'd like to see more people and organizations like the AAV embrace the art of giving by penetrating deep into the community and encouraging the young children to smile. Our children should smile when they can finally see the radiant foyer that awaits them through that institution of "Hope", to their final destination called the "Future". Let us join together to educate our children and continue to provide them with opportunities to excel and be "rainbows" for others.

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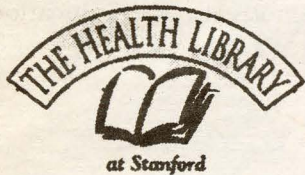
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HEALTH

Mama's Little Baby The Black Woman's Guide to Pregnancy, Childbirth and Baby's First Year



A funny thing happened to me one day during office hours at my practice in Harlem. I was asked to consider co-authoring a book on pregnancy, birth and infant care from a 'black perspective.' Interesting, I thought. I began to search myself and ask, How exactly does my practice differ from that of my white colleagues? And, What would a "black perspective" be on a natural, everyday occurrence like childbirth?

This quotation from the introduction of *Mama's Little Baby; The Black Woman's Guide to Pregnancy, Childbirth and Baby's First Year* is indicative of the thoughtfulness the authors bring to a subject that has been addressed in many other books, and which renders it new. *Mama's Little Baby*, by Dennis Brown,

MD and Pamela A. Toussaint, is a special book because the authors have looked at the complete experience of entering parenthood with the added dimension of African American culture.

First time mother are often overwhelmed by questions about pregnancy and childbirth, and a handbook that explains what is happening to them as they progress through pregnancy and prepare for their child's birth is one way they can soothe their anxieties. *Mama's Little Baby* begins with the chapter "So You Decided to Get Pregnant..." and immediately takes up the health issues that women planning a pregnancy should address which include, stopping smoking, updating vaccinations, and beginning an exercise routine before pregnancy. The chapter also covers fertility tracking, including basal temperature charting to determine ovulation, and cervical mucus observation - subject many of us have heard about, but need the specific information to put

them to use.

In this chapter and throughout the book, the authors bring up cultural and historical perspectives and advice that many readers will remember having heard from their mothers and grandmothers. These sections, called "Historically Speaking..." provide a touchstone of familiarity for the readers. Most readers will encounter a truism or solution that has been passed down through their family or community, and the authors treat them with respect and humor, and when need be, they correct misinformation.

Mama's Little Baby has all the expected chapters on moving through pregnancy, but it is the unexpected chapters that give this book its soul. The chapter "Filling Your Inner Tank: Spiritual, Emotional and Mental" begins with a listing of the effects of stress on pregnancy that include more morning sickness, more painful childbirth, and more pre-term babies than in women who have managed to keep stress at bay.

To combat stress, the authors turn to subjects that often aren't covered in pregnancy books - the role of spirituality during pregnancy; addressing emotional vulnerability at a time when emotions often roller coaster; and ways to calm yourself now and after your baby arrives. They stress mental renewal through reading and viewing subjects that go beyond the newly all-encompassing world of parenting. The chapter on single motherhood is a useful tool for the woman who has entered parenting on her own. The mixture of advice and life stories present a realistic and uplifting approach preparing for single mothering, and it provides models of way to include others in your child's life before she even arrives.

After the baby arrives and you're looking for a guide for the first few years, *The Black Parenting Book*, by Anne C. Beale, MD, MPH, Linda Villarosa, and Allison Abner is a comprehensive, beautiful book that takes up the complicated subject of raising small children. The learning curve for parents is a steep one, and with the first child we're often looking for a resource that addresses the questions we didn't

have time to cover at the doctor's office - this book is it. The introduction is a wonder on its own because of its list "Fifteen Ways To Be A Better Parent" which includes the obvious and not so obvious marks we'd all want to hit if we'd sat down and made of list of what it takes to be a good parent. This list should be photocopied and hung on the refrigerator to remind us of the things we're likely to forget in the fray of getting through the day with a child. Things like, 'Have reasonable expectations for your child', or 'Forgive your parenting mistakes', and truly important-- 'Keep a sense of humor'.

The Black Parenting Book combines pediatric expertise, cultural wisdom and personal anecdotes to create a unique childbearing book. The chapter "Black and Proud: Raising Our Children To Feel Good About Themselves" is one of the valuable features of this book that separates it from the average childbearing texts. Citing research that shows how children absorb ideas of value from infancy on, the authors give concrete examples of how to set a positive tone for your children in seeing themselves as the creative, successful people they can be.

W ♥ MAN HEALTH

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The Spokane AIDS Network is committed to reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Inland Northwest.

Call the Spokane AIDS Network for more information about how to prevent HIV/AIDS.

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905 South Monroe
Spokane, WA 99204

509.455.8993

African Americans and Latinos

By A.W. HARRIS, JR., MA, MS, PH.D., SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY:

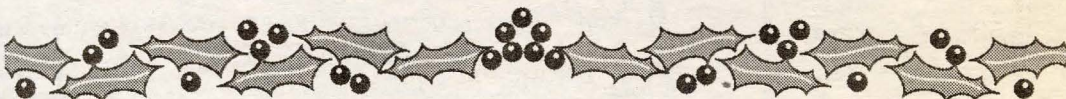
I also agree with many of the readers who have written indicating that is time for African Americans and Latinos to work together. It appears to me that we are succumbing to the 'divide and conquer trap.' In this country, African Americans are counted as a 'racial minority' while Latinos are counted as an 'ethnic' minority. 'Latino' is an ethnic designation which cuts across all racial classifications. How many of you have recently filled out applications which request information about your race and/or ethnicity?

There are designations such as 'black' (not of

Hispanic origin) which subsumes 'black' ethnics such as Jamaicans, Haitians, etc. There is usually another designation for 'Hispanic,' and 'White' (not of Hispanic origin). We are told to check the box which best describes us. From the dialogue of the previous weeks, it has become apparent that a 'Latino' person may be Black, white, of native American origin, but usually he or she is a mixture of all of the aforementioned 'racial' groups. African Americans have the same mixture [I am African, Native American (Cherokee), and Scottish and English, but "racially" classified as Black or African American because I have no Spanish Ancestry], usually the

white Ancestry is more likely to be Western European of origin as opposed to Spanish origin in Latinos.

When we check these boxes, we are being counted and classified and the information could be used in ways not readily apparent to us. The census will be upon us and a great deal of money, political power, and resources will be distributed (or redistributed depending on who controls congress and the White House) according to how we check little boxes. Let us put aside these distinctions, regardless of how we classify ourselves, and begin to work together for the good of all regardless of how we choose to classify ourselves.



Building Community

In a community such as Spokane where the African American population is dispersed throughout the city, it is important to build a sense of community. One of the first criterion for developing a community is to know its members. With the encouragement of President Bill Robinson of Whitworth College and

the assistance of Professor Virginia White and her feature writing class, the African American Voice will publish profiles of community members each month.

Stephanie Nobles-Beans, Ken Beason, Deborah Brown, Nathaniel Greene, Roberta Greene, La'Brenda Hill, Leslie McAuley, Rodney McAuley, V. Anne Smith, Peggie Troutt, Gail Vails, Jann Williams, Jim Williams, Wallace Williams.

Peggie Troutt

BY JENNIFER MEREDITH

The name Sojourner Truth conjures up the memories of African Americans struggling to overcome a society trapped in the jaws of slavery and discrimination. A predominant figure in the abolitionist movement in the 1800s, Sojourner became a symbol for patience, diligence and freedom. For Peggie Troutt, the name has also become her alter ego.

Troutt, like Sojourner, is originally from the East Coast, born and raised in Washington D.C. She moved to Spokane with her husband, and now works as Executive Secretary to the Commander and as co-founder of the African American Club at Fairchild Airforce Base. It was at the Club's annual banquet that Sojourner Truth was brought back to life. Troutt was asked to play the part of Sojourner in African American

Women: Past, Present, and Future.

"Sojourner is my favorite part", exclaimed Troutt. "I could do her all day if there was someone to listen".

Since taking that first step on stage, Troutt has played Sojourner at area middle schools, banquets, churches and community colleges. Prior to taking the part of Sojourner, however, Troutt had no acting experience. Poetry was the initial influence that led to acting. While attending Gonzaga University, Professor John Ferkins encouraged Troutt to do poetry readings.

"His influence made me love what I do now", she said.

Troutt took her new-found acting abilities one step further by performing the part of "the nosy neighbor" in the Onyx Theater production of Raisin in the Sun. While rehearsing for the play that summer, the air conditioning in the building stopped working, and the



stage room was unbearably hot. But the troupe continued working, turning an unpleasant experience into what Troutt claimed was "the best performance they've done yet".

Besides working on the theater group, Troutt gives her time to the

African American Club at Fairchild, Eastern Star and Calvary Baptist Church. Charity work, raising money for college scholarships, working on the Board of Ushers, singing with the church choir, and spending time with her husband, three children and six grandchildren are

Troutt's priorities.

One of her primary motivations is education, second only to God. Troutt's part as Sojourner Truth and her work with the African American Club are the voices that convey her devotion to education. Each year, the Club puts forth a \$1,000 scholarship for an African American college student in Washington. "It's not a lot, but it's enough to help with books, food, or rent", she says. "It's just a little money to help somebody."

Patience is the key to managing her activities, she says. "I take Philippians 4:13 with me everywhere I go... I can do all things through Him who gives me strength", Troutt says. "I love being busy in a positive way!"

Continued from page 17

Booming Economy

are afflicted by poverty as well as those who have the power and the resources to make things happen.

I encourage all professional social workers to utilize their skills, to educate and organize the people they serve while emphasizing the importance of voting. People in

poverty need to know how to access their elected officials and need to hold them accountable for not addressing the issues of poverty. It is going to take a grassroots effort to address poverty in Spokane. So if people in power cannot get the dialogue rolling, the issues should be taken to them. Remember the economy is booming, but not in Spokane.

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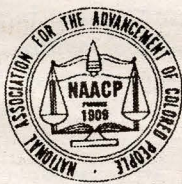
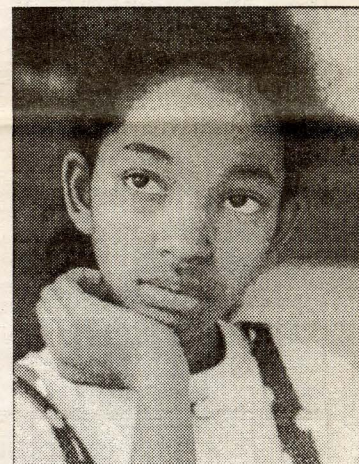
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NEED HELP

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If you have been a victim of harassment and would like to file a complaint, complaint forms can
be picked up at the following locations

East Central Community Center

500 South Stone St.

Northeast Community Center

4001 N. Cook St.

West Central Community Center

1603 W. Belt St.

Martin Luther King Jr. Family

Outreach Center

845 S. Sherman St.

Spokane Community College

Assist. to the Vice President of Student Services
Administration Building #15
1810 N. Greene St.

Spokane Falls Community College

Rich Tucker, Student Funded Services
Student Union Building #17
3410 Ft. George Wright Dr.

For Information Contact : President Eileen Thomas

The legend of Joe Jibbits

K-P KUCHAR-PITERS
AND JAMES SHAHAN

This is the legend of Joe Jibbits. Most people hear this name and laugh, but they know not of the evil associated with it. To most, this creature is just a myth, but we assure you, he is very very real.

This creature existed at the beginning of time, when aliens landed on earth. Bacteria left by the aliens mutated him into what he is now. He is 7 feet tall, slimy, hairy, and possesses rows of razor-sharp teeth. The only way to describe him is to imagine a creature from the movie Aliens, crossed with the creature from the movie Species. It is a savage, mutated beast that until now was trapped underground during the ice age. A recent earthquake freed him from his subterranean prison. It made its way north and

now resides in the northwest part of the U.S. He was not known of until his havoc reached a family camping in the woods. Four of them went into the woods and only one of them came back, half-alive, and barely human. This is his story.

It happened when I was very young, 14, I think. My family, my brother, his girlfriend and I decided to go camping. I was so very eager to go but if I'd known then, what I know now, I would never have set foot outside the house. We hiked into the woods for 2 days before we set up our permanent campground. My brother and his girlfriend kept going and set up camp about 200 yards from ours.

It was the first night that Joe Jibbits attacked. It was my brother and his girlfriend who were attacked. They were taking a stroll, on a moonlit night when the terror struck. Their screams

woke us up. My parents went out to find them but came back empty. The next day we went searching for them. By their campsite we found footprints and blood. Not far from there we found them, or what was left of them. Their bodies had been terribly destroyed and demolished. Most of their internal organs were missing and those that could be found were only bits and pieces. The sight of them makes me ill, even now. We knew it was best to try and head out of the woods before whatever got my brother made its way towards us. We took down camp and tried to get out. But to our dismay, we got lost and couldn't find our way. We were forced to stay another night. I don't know how the creature found us that night. But it must have followed us.

We made a fire to use for protection when we heard strange growling noises coming not far

from our tent. My parents tried to keep it away, using torches and knives, but I guess the creature was too strong. For all I heard was the blood curdling screams of my parents and the devastating roars of the creature. I ran for my life that night when I saw the bubbling, crimson, trail of blood flowing from the woods and past the campfire. I never stopped running, the thought of the blood, glistening in the moonlight, was all that I could think about.

I finally collapsed outside the last row of trees. When I awoke, I was in the hospital. A local farmer had found me a few hours later. I asked what happened to my parents. But no one knew because their remains were never found and neither was the monster.

I'm 60 years old now. I've spent my life living not too far

Continued on page 13

Continued from page 9

Dismantle WTO

policies: 'we can't do this because it would violate the WTO agreements.'

3. The WTO does not just regulate, it actively promotes, global trade. Its rules are biased to facilitate global commerce at the expense of efforts to

promote local economic development and policies that move communities, countries and regions in the direction of greater self-reliance.

4. The WTO hurts the Third World. WTO rules force Third World countries to open their markets to rich country multinationals, and abandon

efforts to protect infant domestic industries. In agriculture, the opening to foreign imports, soon to be imposed on developing countries, will catalyze a massive social dislocation of many millions of rural people.

5. The WTO eviscerates the Precautionary Principle. WTO rules generally block countries from acting in response to potential risk -- requiring a probability before governments can move to resolve harms to human health or the environment.

6. The WTO squashes diversity. WTO rules establish international health, environmental and other standards as a global ceiling through a process of "harmonization;" countries or even states and cities can only exceed them by overcoming high hurdles.

7. The WTO operates in secrecy. Its tribunals rule on the "legality" of nations' laws, but carry out their work behind closed doors.

8. The WTO limits governments' ability to use their purchasing dollar for human rights, environmental, worker rights and other non-commercial purposes. In general, WTO Rules state that governments can make purchases based only on quality and cost considerations.

9. The WTO disallows bans on imports of goods made with child labor. In general, WTO rules do not allow countries to treat products differently based on how they were produced -- irrespective of whether made with brutalized child labor, with workers exposed to toxins or with no regard for species protection.

10. The WTO legitimizes life patents. WTO rules permit and in some cases require patents or similar exclusive protections for life forms.

Some of these problems, such as the WTO's penchant for secrecy, could potentially be fixed, but the core problems -- prioritization of commercial over other values, the constraints on democratic decision-making and the bias against local economies -- cannot, for

they are inherent in the WTO itself.

Because of these unfixable problems, the World Trade Organization should be shut down, sooner rather than later.

That doesn't mean interim steps shouldn't be taken. It does mean that beneficial reforms will focus not on adding new areas of competence to the WTO or enhancing its authority, even if the new areas appear desirable (such as labor rights or competition). Instead, the reforms to pursue are those that reduce or limit the WTO's power -- for example, by denying it the authority to invalidate laws passed pursuant to international environmental agreements, limiting application of WTO agricultural rules in the Third World, or eliminating certain subject matters (such as essential medicines or life forms) from coverage under the WTO's intellectual property agreement.

These measures are necessary and desirable in their own right, and they would help generate momentum to close down the WTO.

Russell Mokhiber is editor of the Washington, D.C.-based Corporate Crime Reporter. Robert Weissman is editor of the Washington, D.C.-based Multinational Monitor. They are co-authors of Corporate Predators: The Hunt for MegaProfits and the Attack on Democracy (Common Courage Press, <http://www.corporatepredators.org>).



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Continued from page 12

Joe Jibbits

from the forest, warning people who would dare to enter, of the evil that lurks in there. Some nights, you can hear the screams of animals and who-knows-who or what is being torn to shreds by Joe Jibbits.

As I said, most people don't believe that he exists. I alone know for sure, that the truth is out there.

The End

FRIENDSHIP BRUCE P. REED

I once played,
played with no worries
but suddenly,
a gloomy scene
sheared over my vul-
nerable heart.
My yokefellow was
striped away
and left him alone,
and me in an awkward
place.
People I've never seen,
people I've never met,
two lost souls
waiting to be re-united!

A Message for all fathers

Walk a little plainer daddy
Said a little boy so frail
I'm following in your foot
steps
And I don't want to fail.
Sometimes your steps are
very plain
Sometimes they are so hard
to see
So walk a little plainer
daddy
For you are leading me.

I know once you walked
this way
Many years ago
And what you did along
the way
I'd really like to know
For sometimes when I am
tempted
I don't know what to do
So walk a little plainer
daddy
For I must follow you.

Someday when I'm grown
up
You are like I want to be
Then I will have a little boy
Who would want to follow
me
And I would want to lead
him right
And help him to be true
So walk a little plainer
daddy
For we must follow you.

Author Unknown

14 BLACK COLLEGES TO CLOSE DOWN FOREVER?

A list of Colleges close to closing due to finan-
cial problems: If this is true, what will you do?

- 1 Allen Univ. (Columbia, SC)
- 2 Arkansas Baptist College (Little Rock, AK)
- 3 Barber-Scotia College (Concord, NC)
- 4 Central State Univ. (Wilberforce, OH)
- 5 Houston-Tillotson College(Austin, TX)
- 6 Jarvis Christian College(Hawkins, TX)
- 7 Lane College (Jackson, TN)
- 8 Mary Holmes Col.(West Point, MS)
- 9 Miles College (Birmingham, AL)
- 10 Paul Quinn College(Dallas, TX)
- 11 Southwestern Christian College(Terrell, TX)
- 12 Texas College(Tyler, TX)
- 13 Texas Southern Univ.(Houston, TX)
- 14 Wiley College(Marshall, TX)

Seven of these colleges are in Texas.

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Something You Can Do If You Will

Low income parents learn advocacy

"As a current Board member and former low-income single working parent, I find the work of Fair Budget to be nothing short of inspirational!" says Anne Remaley in a recent organization mailing.

Fair Budget is dedicated to enabling low-income families to advocate for themselves both in their communities and with the legislature.

Anne Remaley

describes her own experience with Fair Budget:

The year before I joined the Board, I attended a rally during legislative session, hoping to add my voice to concerns about welfare reform, I soon discovered Fair Budget's delegation - sitting on the capitol steps - their bodies bent together in support of each other and their cause.

For the rest of the day, I watched these members

move with confidence and grace among the powers that be. They knew their issues, they had practiced articulating their concerns, standing firm in their convictions, believing that they had a right to be heard. They supported one another, and they represented families from across the state. Fair Budget had provided members with training, transportation, lodging, and child care so that they

- low-income persons representing families from across the state, could be heard.

Another effective activity of the organization is their Welfare Simulation "This is You Life - on Welfare". Trained Fair Budget members help politicians, educators, social workers, and citizens experience what it is like to apply for public assistance.

Fair Budget reimburses for travel, child care, and lodging costs and provides training so low-

income persons from across the state can learn activism skills, travel to the state capitol to meet with legislators, and develop support for issues concerning low-income people in their own communities.

To learn more about the organization, volunteer, or contribute contact;

Fair Budget
172 20th Ave.
Seattle WA 98122
(206) 328-5015
Fax: (206) 325-6291
E-Mail: fairbudget@earthlink.net

Continued from page 4

The Box 'n Hat Players

AFB, as well as several community centers and elementary schools.

The young performers who make up the Box 'n Hat Players hail from all over Spokane, the Spokane Valley and Mead school districts. The current Box 'n Hat Players range in age from 11 to 18. They have all auditioned to be in the troupe, and all give a great

deal of time and, obviously, energy to make the troupe a success wherever they perform. Members of the Box 'n Hat Players also perform frequently in productions for Spokane Civic Theatre, Spokane Children's Theatre, Theatre Arts for Children and Spokane Theatrical Company.

For more information, call Spokane Civic Theatre at (509) 325-1413 or visit our website at

www.spokanecivictheatre.com

African-American Voice

455-8274 rlloyd@cet.com

This paper is a tool to help empower and organize for a better Spokane community. Information is power. Use it and share it or lose it.

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Mothers for Police Accountability

"Jobs + Prevention = Public Safety"

"Fight Crime With Jobs, Not Jails"

"Put us to work building, improving and teaching at wages that support a family"

These are the mottoes of Mothers for Police Accountability, founded in 1990 by Harriett Walden, an African American Seattle mother who was angered by police disregard for her sons' humanity. She decided to model a healthy response. From her anger and determination Mothers was formed. It is now entering its ninth year organizing in coalition with others to support changing police policies which result in police violence and misconduct.

In addition, the organization works to encourage union wages, affirmative action, public works projects, and needed community services. They work for crime prevention through the provision of needed services such as health care; treatment centers; affordable child care, housing and education and stopping child abuse.

Mothers For Police Accountability
PO Box 22886 Seattle WA 98122
(206) 329-2033

Church legislative conference

Kevin Glackin-Coley, the director of Detention Ministry for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle, and president of the Washington Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, will lead a coalition-building and strategy session on the death penalty during the annual Eastern Washington Legislative Conference on Saturday, January 29, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th (24th and Grand).

The event's theme 'Kick Off Your Advocacy' connects to the Super Bowl the next day. It is co-sponsored by the Spokane Council of Ecumenical Ministries, the Catholic Diocese of Spokane, and over twenty statewide organizations. The Rev. Flora Bowers, United Methodist superintendent for the Spokane and part of

the Walla Walla districts, will give the meditation during the worship service.

The church's legislative agenda will be presented by representatives from the Washington Association of Churches, the Washington State Catholic Conference, and the Lutheran Public Policy Office. There will be workshops on issues expected to be addressed by the 2000 legislative session. The goal of the conference is to provide resources to churches for engaging their members in public policy advocacy.

The cost of the conference and the luncheon is \$18 by January 18th and \$20 thereafter. Parish group rates and childcare are available.

For more information and to register, call 624-5756.

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Race Relations Task Force Meetings

Meeting schedule, as received from Jacinta Connell with Gonzaga University. Her telephone number is 323-6102 should you have questions.
Held first Tuesday of the month at 11:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Tuesday
Library
12/07/99

Tuesday
Library
02/01/00

Tuesday
Library
04/04/00

Tuesday
Library
06/06/00

Tuesday
Library
01/04/00

Tuesday
Library
03/07/00

Tuesday
Riverbend
05/02/00

Maureen Rieckers Human Rights Office 625-6266

Something More You Can Do

Civic leader Brokaw announces candidacy

George Nethercutt, Republican representative from the 5th District to the U.S. House of Representatives, has a Democratic challenger. Wayne Brokaw, with 25 years in employee/labor relations and currently Human Resource Manager at Acme Materials and Construction, has thrown down the glove.

As a child Wayne grew up on a ranch in North Dakota and I the Black Hills of South

Dakota before graduating from high school in Issaquah. He has lived in this area for over 20 years. He and his wife, Rita Zorrozuva, have three children - a grown son, a daughter in college and a son in high school. In addition he is a certified and licensed foster parent for severely emotionally disturbed children.

Wayne Brokaw is involved in the community in many other ways. He has been an active organizer

of and participant in the Congress on Race Relations as a member of the Spokane City Mayor's Task Force on Race Relations. He has been a board member of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Outreach Center, belongs to and served in many other family service organizations. He has coached youth athletics and worked with troubled youth. He feels "We just make sure our children have a safe place to grow,

decent health care and a good start in life."

Wayne Brokaw says of himself "I'm a listener, negotiator and mediator..., always developing a win-win result, but I don't compromise my values. I try and live my life by the golden rule that you treat others the way that you

want to be treated."

If you don't like what George Nethercutt has done for you or to you, you should get involved in this campaign.

Friends for Wayne Brokaw, Democrat
222 S. Madison St.,
Spokane WA 99201
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The Know Fraud video

Gates Millennium Scholarship Fund Application Process:

- High school teachers and administrators will nominate low-income students with outstanding leadership and academic qualities
- The United Negro College Fund will review all applications with the assistance of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund and the American Indian College Fund
- The Gates Millennium Scholarship Fund will provide scholarships that cover the "last dollar of aid," or all financial need not covered by other funding sources.

For More Information Contact:

1-877-690-GMSP

Check the internet

For complete information on the Gates Millennium Scholars program, visit

<http://www.gmsp.org>.

Additional information is also available through the United Negro College Fund

(<http://www.uncf.org>),

the American Indian College Fund (<http://collegefund.org>) and the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund

(<http://www.hsf.net>).

An interview with God:

"Come in," God said. "So, you would like to interview Me?"

"If you have the time," I said.

God smiled and said: "My time is eternity and is enough to do everything; what questions do you have in mind to ask me?"

"What surprises you most about mankind?"

God answered: "That they get bored of being children, are in a rush to grow up, and then long to be children again. That they lose their health to make money and then lose their money to restore their health. That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live neither for the present nor the future. That they live as if they will never die, and they die as if they had never lived..."

God's hands took mine and we were silent for while and then I asked..."As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

God replied with a smile: "To learn that they cannot make anyone love them. What they can do is to let themselves be loved. To learn that what is most valuable is not what they have in their lives, but who they have in their lives. To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others. All will be judged individually on their own merits, not as a group on a comparison basis! To learn that a rich person is not the one who has the most, but is one who needs the least. To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in persons we love, and that it takes many years to heal them. To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness. To learn that there are persons that love them dearly, but simply do not know how to express or show their feelings. To learn that money can buy everything but happiness. To learn that a true friend is someone who knows everything about them...and likes them anyway".

I sat there for awhile enjoying the moment. I thanked Him for his time and for all that He has done for me and my family, and He replied, "Anytime. I'm here 24 hours a day. All you have to do is ask for me, and I'll answer."

People may forget what you said. People may forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

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MISTER B.B. KING

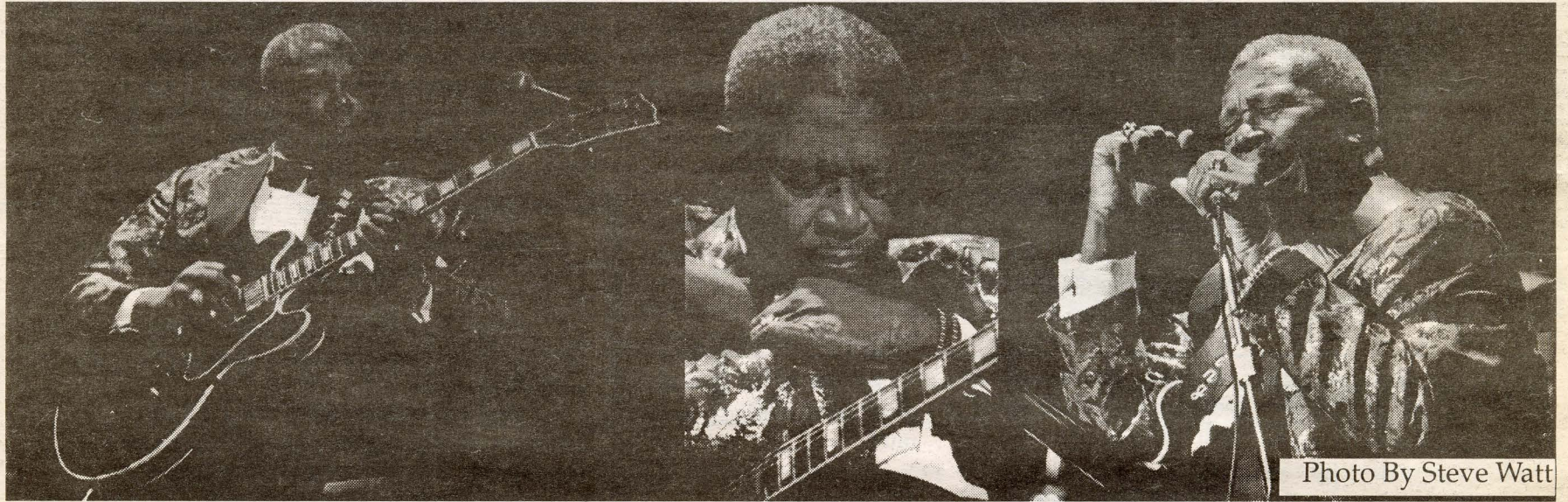


Photo By Steve Watt

BY JIM KERES AND DENNIS O'NEILL

Young Bluesman

In the Beginning

The year was 1925. In the area of Mississippi known as the "Delta", a baby was born on September 16 in a small sharecropper's cabin near the town of Itta Bena to Albert and Nora Ella King, hardworking sharecropping farmers who had lived in Mississippi all of their lives.

Nora Ella King left Albert King for another man when Riley was only 4 years old and sent Riley to live in nearby Kilmicheal with his maternal grandmother, Elnora Farr who sharecropped on the land of a dairy farmer. Riley's mother and grandmother were both very religious and he attended services with them at the Holiness Church in Kilmicheal. The preacher, Archie Fair, led the congregation by playing guitar. Riley was fascinated with the preacher's guitar and Archie taught him how to play the E, A and B chords.

Riley's mother died in the summer of 1935. When word reached Riley's father he contacted Riley and told him that he could come to live with he and his family in Lexington, Mississippi. Riley was reluctant to leave Kilmicheal because of his schooling and his newly formed gospel singing group, but after his grandmother died in 1940 he moved to Lexington to live with his father.

In the spring of 1943, he moved to Indianola, Mississippi to form a singing group called "The Famous St. John's Gospel Singers." with his cousin Birkett, got a skilled job as a tractor driver for a planter named Johnson Barrett, and a girlfriend. Riley also played the blues on the Indianola street corners on Saturday nights. Blues music was not new to him, his mother's cousin, Bukka White, a noted Memphis bluesman, would come to visit Riley's family when they lived in Kilmicheal. Riley soon found out that by using his day wages for traveling money to get to other Delta towns, he could double or triple his money by playing the blues. His profits and exposure to other Delta bluesmen turned his musical interests away from the gospel spirituals.

Riley had to register for the Military draft in 1944 and was found physically fit for service. Johnson Barrett, not wanting to lose a skilled tractor driver, applied to the draft board on Riley's behalf for an occupational deferment. Barrett also told Riley that getting married would improve his chances of being deferred. Riley married his girlfriend Martha and continued to work for the planter until one day he accidentally damaged one of his tractors. Not wanting to face an angry Johnson Barrett, he left town with his guitar and \$2.50 in his pocket heading to Memphis in search

of his cousin Bukka White.

So in the summer of 1946 Bukka took young Riley in. For the next ten months, Bukka schooled Riley in the art of the blues, everything from how to hold his guitar to phrasing lyrics. Bukka's most important trait, which he impressed upon Riley, was his durability, and without it, B.B. King would not be who he is today.

Riley's first break came when he asked Sonny Boy Williamson, who had a blues music radio show on station KWEM, if he could play a song on his show. The radio station was flooded with calls. Sonny Boy set Riley up with a gig in front of a live crowd at Miss Annie's Saloon in West Memphis.

Riley couldn't have picked a better time to return to Memphis. On June 7, 1947 a new radio station, WDIA, went on the air. By 1948, it had become one of the first all black staffed and managed radio stations. Riley went to them and asked if he would make a record. The station had just secured an advertising contract for a health tonic named Pepticon, the competitor for the tonic Hadacol, which was promoted by Sonny Boy Williamson on KWEM. Bert Ferguson, one of the WDIA owners, set Riley up with a ten minute spot in which he could play his guitar and sing anything he liked, as long as he promoted Pepticon. Riley's advertising jingle was "Pepticon, Pepticon, sure is good - You can get it anywhere in

your neighborhood."

Riley became known as the Pepticon boy. Because of his popularity, the radio station expanded his program and promoted him to a DJ. Riley's show was called the "Sepia Swing Club." He played recordings by black artists, played his guitar and also sang requests from listeners. Now that he was a DJ, Riley needed a catchy name. He started out as the "Beale Street Blues Boy," later he changed it to "Blues Boy King," and finally shortened it to the now famous "B.B. King."

B.B. King's popularity was spreading and he made his first recordings in 1949. Although none of the recordings were a national success, locally B.B. was quite popular. B.B.'s airplay of his records, along with his public appearances, built him a steady circuit of roadhouses and juke joints where he was the top attraction. He was moving up fast and needed a manager. B.B.'s first manager was a Beale Street pool hall owner, Robert Henry.

Just after Christmas in 1951, B.B.'s seventh RPM single, "Three O'Clock Blues" hit Billboard's R & B record chart. By early 1952, the song reached the number one position and stayed there for 15 weeks. B.B. had finally received national recognition as a blues musician and Robert Henry was able to get him his first national tour.

As a result of his new found success, B.B.'s marriage was now under a heavy strain. It was only a matter of time before the tension resulted in

divorce. While B.B. was on tour, he got word that Martha had left Memphis and had filed for divorce. Although he was crushed by the news, it inspired him to write the song "Woke Up This Morning," which was his first big hit after "Three O'Clock Blues."

Rise to Stardom

B.B. King's opening show on this first national tour in 1952 was at the Howard Theater in Washington, D.C. Playing with the Tiny Bradshaw band, B.B.'s performance shined, he was on his way to becoming one of the best in the business. Over the next 18 months, B.B. performed on the road with layovers in Memphis where he continued to work for radio station WDIA. Robert Henry was still managing B.B., but was not well equipped to manage a nationwide career. In 1953, B.B. signed up with a new manager and hired a Houston based booking agent. B.B. now had a legitimate national presence on the "Chitlin Circuit."

By 1958 B.B. had a loyal following and was a major artist in his field. He remarried but as in the case of his first wife, the tension of B.B. constantly on the road drove the couple to divorce in 1966, and B.B. to his biggest hit song, "The Thrill Is Gone."

Though the birth of Rock & Roll music made stars of many black per-

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B.B. King

formers such as Little Richard, Fats Domino, James Brown and Chuck Berry, unfortunately for B.B., race music remained isolated from mainstream white America.

Around 1965, the final barriers that kept blues as race music began falling down. The change began at the Newport Folk Festival where white America first heard the music of Sun House and

Mississippi John Hurt. Also performing that day was a new group called the Butterfield Blues Band which gained wide popularity in white Middle America. Countless times the guitarists in the group, Elvin Bishop and Mike Bloomfield, were asked, "Where did you learn to play that way?" Both answered honestly, "By copying B.B.'s licks." People looked at them blankly, "BB. who?" "The real monster," Bishop and Bloomfield would reply,

"B.B. King."

With a hit record, "The Thrill is Gone", and a new manager, the chitlin circuit gave way to a combination of jazz clubs and rock palaces, such as the Fillmore East. In 1969, B.B. made his first network TV appearance on the "Tonight Show," a lucky break provided by Flip Wilson who had been filling in for Johnny Carson. But of all his new triumphs, the most symbolic was his appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show in 1971.

Playing on the Sullivan Show was a sign that a new performer had arrived with the American public.

How did B.B. King get from the chitlin circuit to the living rooms of Middle America? B.B.'s success was not isolated, he rode in on top of a wave of sudden popularity for urban blues music. But this can be only part of the answer, considering that even two years after white America got the blues, they still had not heard of B.B. King. Yet

when he arrived on the scene, the King came to his throne as the true heir whose identity had finally been revealed. Long live the King, may we all be so privileged as to enjoy the man and his music for many more years to come.

Editor's note: How many of you had the opportunity to hear Mr. B.B. King when he appeared in Spokane last month? If he comes again, don't miss it.

BOOMING ECONOMY

BY ROBERT C. WILLIAMSON JR

This is the time of the year that I do a lot of reflecting on the events of the past year. The one topic that was mentioned a lot was America's booming economy. I took a look at my financial situation and it is not booming. Out of curiosity I went and asked my friends if they were prospering from the booming economy. They all said no, that it must be passing them by.

This prosperity must be passing by many of the citizens of Spokane. A few years ago, I read a statistic that stated that the greatest amount of poverty in the state of Washington was in the 3rd District located here in Spokane.

More disturbing is the statistic that one in every eight children in Washington is going to bed hungry. I have also heard that most people using the food banks are families where both parents work.

Recently it was announced on the news that the rich were giving more to charity. It was not mentioned that most of the money is used to pay administrative salaries and for the upkeep of the buildings. The trickle down effect was a favorite theme during The Reagan era. Do not forget that it is time to collect coats, blankets and toys for those less fortunate. The sponsors of these drives state that we need to collect more than last year because there are

more people in need. Remember the economy is booming.

I know that if you are going to complain about something you should have some solutions. The way capitalism is designed there will always be those who are less fortunate. The number of less fortunate seem to be increasing. Now that the elections are over in our city, it is time for the city council to have dialogue about the amount of poverty in our city and what can be done to seriously address the issue. Creating jobs that pay a livable wage will begin to address a portion of the problem. If the city council does not do this than a committee should be designed to address this issue. The membership should include those who

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PHN speaks out

only to the community but also to women and children. This isn't just my work -- I am not special, this is the work of every PHN. I am no different from any of them, with the exception of a better tan!

I fully understand that in this day of smaller government and fewer taxes that everyone feels the pressure and it means for everyone a very real need to "think outside the box"

But creativity should not be at the expense of the seventeen-year-old pregnant street teen that for the first time in her life has had someone to depend on her and has finally admitted she needs help.

It cannot be at the expense of my friends and fellow professionals in other community agencies who depend and count on me to provide the services they cannot for either lack of resources, time, or job description.

It cannot be at the

expense of the juvenile justice system that will feel the added pressure from kids turning to crime to provide for their families in a very real world of ever diminishing resources.

And it cannot be at the expense of my children who attend school with the damaged, abused, non-attached child who has become a predator because no one has ever taught bonding and attachment and the importance and respect for human life to his parent. How can they teach their child that they are important and matter, when no one is there to teach them? I teach with word and deed these important lessons.

I love this job not because it's a great job, or because I work with incredible women, or because I have supervisors that have consistently supported me and encouraged me. I love this job because at the end of the day when I go home tired, frustrated and smelling of cigarette smoke

and baby vomit, I know -- I don't think, I know -- two things I can always count on: that today I touched the life of a child, for one moment I brought good, and I can count on being able to look myself in the mirror and truly like who I see.

As you consider this issue please ask the question, can our community really stand to lose this invaluable resource? Are the cuts so great that the board is willing to send a non-verbal message to these families that they are not worthy of the money, time and resources we have?

I have always prided myself on the thought that we are one of the biggest small towns around because we maintain the tradition of small towns that people watch out for each other and take care of everyone, even the most needy. Have we now outgrown the tradition that distinguishes us from bigger cities?

It is not money or things that are important and of value; it's the people.

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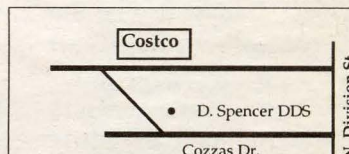
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Endangered Black Radio

BY EARL OFARI
HUTCHINSON

The moment it was publicly announced that Atlanta-based Cox Communications was putting Los Angeles radio station KACE on the auction block, black leaders and activists in LA wailed that blacks would lose a media outlet that had provided crucial information, news, and analysis on issues of grave concern to their community for nearly three decades.

There was some truth to this complaint. KACE, though not black-owned at the time of the announced sale, is the latest in the lengthening line of black-owned and "urban format" radio stations that beam to a mostly black audience to either change ownership and/or programming content in the past year. According to a study by the Black Broadcasters Alliance on minority radio ownership, the number of minority-owned radio stations nosedived from 127 in 1997 to 100 in 1998. The majority of those sold were black-owned stations. If present trends continue even more black-owned stations will

become faint memories in the next few years.

Rising operating costs, racial discrimination by advertisers, relentless media consolidation, and changing listener demographics, have made black stations ripe for the pickings of corporate broadcast syndicates. They recognize the lucrative potential of black stations to reach thousands of black or Latino consumers. They gobble them up quickly and on the cheap.

Yet beyond ineffectual complaints, the only response of black leaders and activists nationally to the onslaught against black media is the even more ineffectual call to write letters in protest to the FCC. But the sale of KACE and other black-owned radio stations had nothing to do with sentiment, tradition, or interest in serving the broadcast needs of the black community.

The sale of these stations is a business decision, period. Whoever is the first in the door with the cash gets the stations.

That's why the moment that I heard that KACE was on the auction block I didn't weep, wail,

moan or scream about racism. I immediately called Cathy Hughes. She owns Radio One, the premier black-owned broadcast syndicate in America, with twenty-five stations in the Midwest and East Coast. Hughes is a consummate expert at structuring packages to purchase radio stations.

I wanted to know what it would take to put together a deal to buy KACE. Hughes said it would take a small group of black investors with the cash, lending and investment connections to make the purchase. There are a staggering number of professionals, businesspersons, entertainers, athletes, and educators with the income and connections who live or do business in black communities to purchase endangered black stations.

There's also a useful model on how to rescue a valued black-owned media institution from extinction. In 1997 the black family-owned Sengstacke Publishing company which for decades owned a chain of black newspapers that included the Chicago Defender and the

Michigan Chronicle fell on hard times.

The newspapers were put up for sale. Detroit businessman Don Barden recognized the danger of the papers passing out of black ownership. He did not weep, moan, groan, and scream about conspiracies, racism and the damaging loss to the black community. He took action.

He used cash, bank loans, and stock options to purchase the newspaper chain. Barden had two goals. The first was to retain black ownership of a valued media resource and institution. The second was to make money. He announced a bold plan to restructure the operations by modernizing plant facilities, upgrading the editorial and news content of the papers, and making better use of computer technology to turn them into a profitable asset. Barden had deep enough pockets to buy the papers. But he also had the political consciousness and vision to see that an independent black media still plays a crucial role in educating and informing African-Americans on vital community issues,

and preserving their most valued cultural heritage--black music.

That vision is sorely missing when blacks allow black radio stations to pass from their ownership. Still, I predict that when the first sounds of Latin music, Spanish-language programming, country and western music, or infomercial programming waft through the radio dial they once turned to for their programs, many blacks will angrily scream that Latinos, Asians, and white corporate interests are plundering the black community of its assets.

But ethnic saber rattling or race baiting can't absolve them of the blame they must bare for doing nothing to take financial control of the institutions that give the black community a voice. Whom will black activists blame if and when venerable black-owned radio stations in their cities go the way of KACE in Los Angeles?

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is a nationally syndicated columnist and the director of the National Alliance for Positive Action. email:ehutchi344@aol.com

Thoughts while awaiting meltdown of the universe

BY VICTOR E. BUKSBAZEN

With less than a month remaining until the technological meltdown of the universe, people around Spokane are preparing for the worst. While our friends in DC and Seattle are assuring us that the Y2K crisis will actually be a boon instead of a disaster, a few are taking extraordinary precautions to protect themselves. Like purchasing a "Millennium Fortress" kit over the Internet. This kit consists mostly of coils of barbed wire, considered to be widely distributed, we suspect, it may also be the source of widespread blood poisoning, at thousands of survivalists would themselves while attempting to protect themselves!

W.C. Fields would be delighted!

A scourge of hatred

Hate crimes are vicious acts committed by morally-challenged individuals because of an

ingrained prejudice. Those who commit them are usually people who fear or feel threatened by their victims because they represent something different or unknown. This perception often causes an irrational response which is entirely out of proportion to its alleged stimulus -- such as dragging an innocent African American man to a sordid demise behind a pickup truck, or strapping a gay man to a split rail fence and allowing him to die of exposure.

The "motive" for these murders were a general hatred of Blacks and "gay rage" brought on by fear of homosexuals.

This sort of crime can be deterred or prevented simply by raising our kids to accept others as their equals, even when there are some differences. Some religious fundamentalists -- be they Southern Baptists or Shi'ite Muslims -- condemn certain groups out of hand instead of evaluating each member as an individual.

Acceptance of others does not necessarily mean condoning of what they represent. It simply means recognizing their inalienable right to exist. Our children need to realize and internalize that some of the things which make us different are valuable for what those who have them can contribute to society. They do not make them bad, weird or dangerous.

To hate someone because of race, religion, physical limitations, sexual orientation or economic status is not only hurtful to the object of discrimination. It is also disastrous to the one who does the hating, in that it prevents him or her from becoming all that he could otherwise have been.

Tougher legislation sought

In many states today legislation is being called for that would enhance penalties for crimes against certain protected groups which are not now

covered. (I'm talking death penalty!)

There are already statutes calling for capital punishment for racially-motivated murder of African Americans; now they are being sought for the same crimes committed against gays and the disabled.

(Since I lost my larynx almost five years ago due, in part, to a misdiagnosis of cancer, I suppose I would be included in the latter category!)

As we (mistakenly) mark the passage of the second millennium of the Christian era at the end of the month, let us each review our own attitudes and actions towards those who are superficially different from us.

Tolerance and diversity are not just politically-correct attitudes. They are ways of looking at situations and people that reveal them to be normal, vibrant and healthy rather than evil or corrupt.

Personally, I'll take my chances with the Y2K bug. I think there's a much bigger chance of the universe melting from hatred and intolerance.

Why we don't hear others

If you want to listen so you really hear what others say, make sure you're not a:

- Mind reader. You'll hear little or nothing as you think "What is this person really thinking or feeling?"

- Rehearser. Your mental tryouts for "Here's what I'll say next" tune out the speaker.

- Filterer. Some call this selective listening - hearing only what you want to hear.

- Dreamer. Drifting off during a face-to-face conversation can lead to an embarrassing "What did you say?" or "Could you repeat that?"

- Identifier. If you refer everything you hear to your experience, you probably didn't really hear what was said.

- Comparer. When you get side-tracked assessing the messenger, you're sure to miss the message.

- Derailer. Changing the subject too quickly soon tells others you're not interested in anything they have to say.

- Sparrer. You hear what's said but quickly belittle it or discount it. That puts you in the same class as the derailer.

- Placater. Agreeing with everything you hear just to be nice or to avoid conflict does not mean you're a good listener.

Source: The Writing Lab, Dept. of English, Purdue University, 1356 Heavilon Hall, West Lafayette, IN 47907.



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