

# THE CONDUCTOR

*The Official Newspaper of The Overground RR!!*

VOLUME 7 No. 2

December 2010

## The ORR WORSHIP CENTERS

- Anointed Word Evangelistic Tabernacle
- Anointed Vision of Hope
- Ariel Bowen UMC
- The Ark of Salvation
- Believers' Bible Christian Church
- Ben Hill Christian Church
- Ben Hill UMC
- Bethesda Cathedral of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.
- Beulah Missionary Baptist Church
- Big Bethel AME
- Big Miller Grove Missionary Baptist Church
- Boat Rock Baptist Church
- Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal
- Calvary United Methodist Church
- Cascade United Methodist Church
- Christian Fellowship Baptist Church
- Clarkston First Baptist Church
- Columbia Drive United Methodist Church
- Covenant Ministries
- Dodd-Sterling UMC
- Elizabeth Baptist Church
- Emmaus Road Missionary Baptist Church
- Emmanuel Tabernacle
- Enon Church
- Evangelistic New Life Worship Center
- First AME Church
- First Iconium Baptist Church
- First Victory Baptist Church
- Friendship Baptist Church
- Friendship Community Church
- Grace Community Fellowship Church
- Greater Heights Christian Church
- Greater Mount Carmel AME
- Greater New Life Baptist Church
- Greater New Light Missionary Baptist Church
- The Greater Piney Grove Baptist Church
- Greenforest Community Baptist Church
- Headland Heights UMC
- Highly Favored Ministries
- Hillside International Truth Center, Inc.
- Hopewell MBC
- Impact! Doing Church Differently
- International Christian Fellowship
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- Life Changing Ministries
- Light of the World Christian Tabernacle
- Lindsay Street Baptist Church
- Love Life Christian Fellowship Church
- Midway Missionary Church
- Miracles, Miracles and More Miracles
- Mission On The Move
- Mt. Calvary Baptist Church
- Mt. Carmel Baptist Church
- Muhammed's Mosque No. 15
- New Beginnings Ministries
- New Fountain Worldwide Ministries
- New Jerusalem Baptist Church
- Omega Holiness Church
- Poplar Springs Baptist Church
- Powerhouse of Deliverance Cathedral
- Providence Missionary Baptist Church
- Ray Of Hope Christian Church
- Redemptive Life Christian Fellowship Church
- Salem Bible Church
- Solomon Temple Missionary Baptist Church
- St James Missionary Baptist Church
- St. John Missionary Baptist Church
- St. Mark AME Church
- St. Mark Lutheran Church
- St. Philip AME Church
- The True Light Baptist Church
- Wheat Street Baptist Church
- Woods Memorial Baptist Church
- World Covenant Christian Center
- Zion Hill Baptist Church

## ABOVE ALL THINGS MINISTRY

# The Call and the Response

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." - III John:2

**"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."**

**John 8:32**

# ARE YOU READY TO BE FREE?

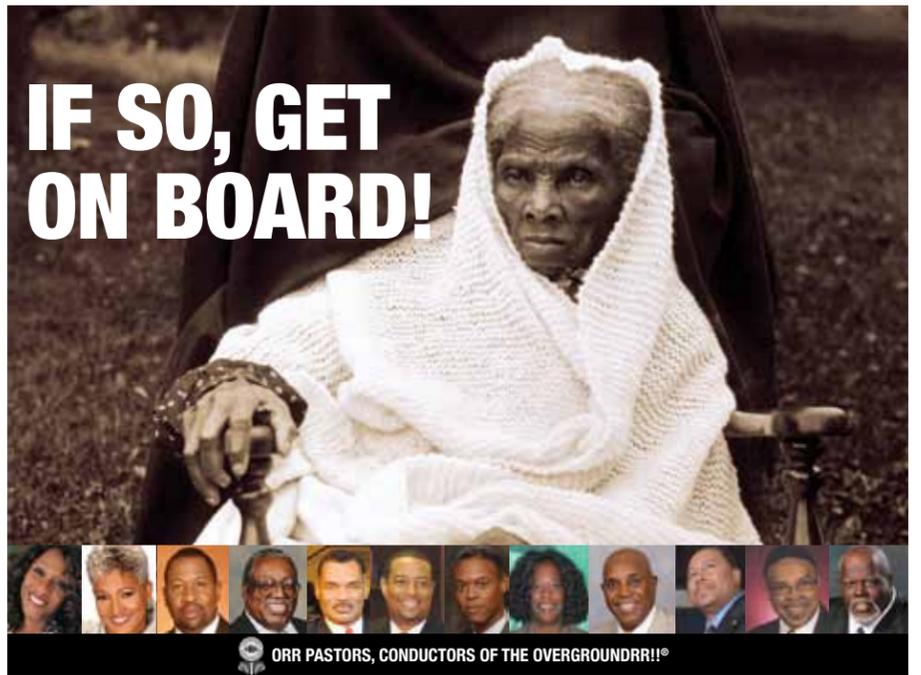
### JIM CROW SLAVERY

The Overground RR!!® is a continuation of the Underground Railroad. The Underground Railroad, boldly organized and led by Harriet Tubman, delivered us to a period of physical freedom from the chained phase of America's enslavement of our people. After the Civil War we were re-enslaved in a different form. They called it Jim Crow. This is not acknowledged or even recognized as slavery. Blacks don't recognize this critically important fact because of the deep and extremely long-lasting effects of 'Tobyitis' (See Name Is Not Toby! Or Is It?, Conductor, 3rd Quarter).

An accurate reference to our existence until the very recent 1970s would be "Jim Crow Slavery". Instead, we have been taught that we lived through a period of "segregation". The segregation label was crafted by the oppressors who did not want us to realize what they were really inflicting upon us. The truth is that most of us living today were born during an evil form of slavery: Jim Crow Slavery.

Some of us will find it hard to believe that we were born Nuevo slaves. But it is true. It is important for us to come to overstand (not just understand) this truth. Think about it. Our fathers were called "Boy" to their faces by others as young as 7 or 8 years old. Blacks were customarily called N..... and it was nothing our people could do about it. As Jim Crow slaves we did not belong to ourselves. We belonged to any oppressive man or woman that decided to take us in whatever demonic terroristic, dehumanizing or humiliating method they chose.

Danielle McGuire, author of *At The Dark End Of The Street: A New History* came to realize this truth when she discovered the reality of who Rosa Parks really was. "I knew this was a



story I had to tell when I figured out that black women had been enduring, resisting and testifying about interracial sexual violence for years and that these crucial and revealing moments had never made their way into the history of the civil rights movement." The Huffington Post, September 10, 2010.

Our devastated, shattered and violated women (mothers, sisters, daughters) - if they were allowed to live or otherwise survived the attacks - returned to their men, their families who were helplessly unable to protect them. There were no police to report these daily atrocities. Most likely the police were the perpetrators. Under any circumstance the White terrorist violators had done nothing which was not approved by the law of the morally corrupt White society which ruled when we were born into Jim Crow Slavery.

### NOTHING COMPARES TO THE ENSLAVEMENT OF BLACKS

Because we have been brainwashed and conditioned to accept the barbaric and inhumane treatment afflicted upon us, we still allow just about everything to be classified as just as bad as or worse than the unspeakable evil of slavery which we endured. The Jewish Holocaust lasted at best from 1939 to 1945. However, society continuously speaks of the despicable treatment Jews suffered under the Nazis. Indeed, elderly former Nazis are still being pursued, captured and tried.

How does that unfortunate time compare to 400 hundred years of kidnapping, rape, murder and every form of terror and dehumanization experienced by Blacks? In reality, there can be no legitimate or justified comparison. But, because of Tobyitis, we not only allow it; we accept it, endorse and advocate the comparison.

### THE EFFECTS OF SLAVERY ARE MANIFESTED IN OUR ECONOMY TODAY

Because of the enslavement of Blacks, both chained and Jim Crow, African-Americans are the only people in this country without an economic infrastructure. An economic infrastructure is an effective system by which people

Ethnicity	Amount Spent	Business Revenues	% of Amount Spent
<b>Blacks</b>	\$590 billion	\$89 billion	15%
<b>Hispanics</b>	\$490 billion	\$222 billion	45%
<b>Asians</b>	\$209 billion	\$326 billion	155%
<b>Whites</b>	\$6 trillion, 231 billion	\$22 trillion, 97 billion	353%

ARE YOU READY? CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### ORR A • L • L • I • A • N • C • E • S

100 Black Men of Atlanta, Inc. - 100 Black Women of Atlanta - A Guiding Hand - All Empowered Inc. - Americolor Opera Alliance  
 Association of Black Cardiologists - Atlanta Be Someone - Atlanta Business League - Atlanta Quest - Atlanta Urban League  
 Black Women Film Network - Career Choice International - Chi Mathias Music Ministries - City of Atlanta, Minority Business Opportunities  
 Cleveland Ave - Roy L. Yancy, Sr. Public Library - Community Teen Coalition, Inc. - Concerned Black Clergy - FACAA  
 Fulton County Workforce Development - Georgia Black Chamber of Commerce - GABEO - Ga. Coalition of Black Women, Inc.  
 Girl Scout Troop 9216 - Greater Atlanta Economic Alliance - Habesha Inc. - Heart 2 Heart Kids Foundation - Investment Atlanta, Inc. - Jehovah Jireh  
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 NAACP of Georgia National Action Network - Radio One - Ropheka Rock of the World, Inc. - SCLC Women - Show and Prove Youth Organization  
 SKIP, Inc. - Soul Food Museum - SPARC - The B-Aware Foundation - The Grapevine HIV/AIDS Foundation - The Green City Development Group  
 The Michelle Davis Show - The Owens Center For Excellence - The Spirit of Sweet Auburn - Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture  
 Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation - United Negro College Fund - WCLK Jazz 91.9 FM

**Letter From the Chairman**



Aaron Turpeau,  
ORR Chairman

**Where's The Beef?**

We cannot ignore this young generation as they strive for color blindness. We have made great strides. A Black has been elected President of the student government of the University of Georgia, as well as electing a Black as Homecoming Queen. This is 50 years after the rough integration of UGA by Charlene Hunter (now Gault) and Hamilton Holmes. About that same time we in Ohio were celebrating Ohio State's first Black Homecoming Queen, Marlene Owens, daughter of the great Jessie Owens. But like the popular Burger King commercial "Where's The Beef?", today I have to ask the same question of Black people, "Where's The Beef?", Where is all of the money that through the great struggle we are now able to earn? The chart in the lead article of this paper makes it plain where our money is going.

Recently, Piers Morgan premiered his show on CNN by interviewing Oprah Winfrey and made a profound statement, "We live in a country where the most powerful man is Black and the most powerful female is Black (Queen Oprah)". But today I ask us, Why are we so weak as a people? The answer to that question is will be found as we realize the answer to the question, "Where is the Beef? Or Where is the Money?"

Major League Baseball is coming to Atlanta with a high profile baseball game "The Civil Rights Game" for the next two seasons. There will be awards and programs and a lot of celebrations, BUT "Where is the money" of our people?

Please note that I stated "of" not "for" our people. As a people, until in recent years, we never looked for anyone to give us anything. It has never happened as long as we have been in America. Our people built this country! But, unlike other people, we've been told that we don't deserve any consideration for centuries of work we rendered (regardless of the circumstances), the debate is whether we even deserve an apology. The opportunities to make money under Affirmative Action programs have all but ended. As private sector development plans have increased during the latest recession, there was a successful push by firms owned by members of other communities to build on Black College campuses, build Black church buildings and in urban cities. It is a well known fact that even during good times, Blacks were not allowed opportunities to design or build any private corporate buildings in Atlanta. We could only do airports, city halls, courthouses, jails etc. The same is true in industries other than construction. I am not talking about the special cases, the Kings and Queens, the First this and that, the tokens. I'm talking about a race of people that has skills, as evidence by the country we built from the first nail hammered by our earliest ancestors under the oppression of chained slavery to the Atlanta airport built on time and under budget.

The OvergroundRR!! continues to point out the issues surrounding our money and if we just circulate our own money in our community, use our power and not just blame others, we would not continue to ask "Where is the Money?"

**ARE YOU READY? CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

can meet their needs with resources provided by the people of their own community. This fact is the reason that Blacks control only a very small percentage of their economy.

In 2000, approximately 36 million Blacks spent approximately \$590 billion (spending and population data is from the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia; July 2008 issue). However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the revenue of Black businesses in 2002 (data from the closest year available) approximated \$89 billion, only 15 percent of that amount.

During 2000, approximately 36 million Hispanics spent approximately \$490 billion. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2002, the revenue of Hispanic businesses approximated \$222 billion, which is 45 percent of that amount. During 2000, approximately 11 million Asians spent approximately \$209 billion. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2002 the revenue of Asian businesses approximated \$326 billion, which is 155 percent of that amount.

During 2000, Whites spent approximately \$6 trillion, 231 billion. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2002 the revenue of White businesses approximated \$22 trillion, which is 353 percent of that amount. (The article intends to be as accurate as possible. In addition to businesses identified as specifically owned by Whites, publicly held businesses are included. It is assumed that Whites own well more than 90 percent. If you disagree, make your own adjustment, the difference will make no distinction in the point of this article.)

During 2000 Whites spent approximately \$6 trillion, 231 billion. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2002 the revenue of White businesses approximated \$22 trillion, which is 353% of that amount.

In 2008, the spending of Blacks increased to \$913 billion even though the Black population only increased by 3 million making a total of

approximately 39 million. Assuming the same percentage for business revenue for the respective ethnic groups, the direness of the picture is apparent. This is the empirical evidence which shows where we are.

Blacks spend more than any ethnic group other than Whites, but we spend very little of it with our own businesses. The churches, businesses and consumers have begun to recognize that these are not mere statistics but a reflection of a dire state in which we, as a people, have grown accustomed to supporting businesses owned by others and neglecting our own. This minimizes the circulation of the dollar in the Black community leaving the community dependent on the prerogatives of others.

**THE TRUTH WILL MAKE US FREE**

The slow awakening of our collective and individual psyches has brought us to a growing awareness of who we are, from whence we have come and where we must go.

Recent news headlines include the horrific story of Jaycee Dugard, a 29-year-old woman who was kidnapped at the age of 11. Reports state that she was in contact with the outside world, was trusted to handle business for her alleged kidnapper Phillip Garrido, birthed two daughters by him (similarly to Sally Henning by Thomas Jefferson) and had every opportunity to escape her captivity. Like us, she'd been stripped of her name and her past.

Her alleged kidnapper completely separated her from any recollection of who she was. She'd become who he wanted her to be. Like Harriett Tubman of the Underground Railroad is often quoted as having said, "...I would have freed more only had they known they were slaves." Poor Dugard, after having been broken, didn't need to be chained; she did not know that she was a slave.

This awful story capsulizes the experience of Blacks. This is the Truth. Unless we come to know the Truth we can never be free. We were kidnapped. Like Dugard we were kept in the

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*The ORR welcomes our new members*

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| <p><b>Alliances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heart 2 Heart Kids Foundation</li> <li>Scribe One Media, LLC</li> <li>Mason Boys &amp; Girls World</li> <li>Chi Mathias Music Ministries</li> </ul> | <p><b>Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legacy Ford</li> <li>Lifelink Enterprises</li> <li>True Love Productions</li> </ul> | <p><b>Churches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evangelistic New Life</li> <li>Worship Center</li> <li>First Victory Baptist Church</li> <li>Anointed Vision of Hope</li> </ul> |
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Thanks, for getting aboard . . .

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# OVERGROUND RR!!® PULPIT



**Host Pastor**  
**Senior Pastor, Providence MBC**  
**Pastor Gerald Durley**

This country has been through one of the worst recession in our lifetime. Of course, as a people we have experienced the challenge of having to get over what we have been under. The church has always been instrumental in helping us to make it over. In this issue we welcome Dr. Gregory Pollard to share with us what we need to do to get over what we've been under.



**Guest Pastor**  
**Senior Pastor/Teacher, The Enon Church**  
**Rev. Dr. Gregory Pollard**

Mark 10:46-50 – “And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart.

Get up; he is calling you.” And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.”

## How To Get Over What You Been Under

By Rev. Dr. Gregory L. Pollard – The Enon Church

In society as we see it today, with the nationwide economic system that we face, I'm certain many of us if not all of us have gone through some situations, some difficulties, some afflictions be it physical or spiritual that stands in our way as we seek to move in the direction that God would have us go. It is a fact that God does not always remove the afflictions, but He does however give us the ability to overcome them.

I've learned that you've got to understand the past to appreciate the present. But the real tragedy is we also have the proclivity or the (tendency) to major in our infirmities, our problems, and our difficulties.

But I want to serve notice to you today, that you can Overcome Your Handicaps, Defeat Your Difficulties and Master Your Misfortune. You can get over what you been under. The FIRST thing you must do if you want to get over what you've been under is:

### 1. CONCENTRATE ON YOUR ASSETS (v47)

The reason we can't overcome our handicaps is because we get so focused on our deficiencies, that we ignore our assets. We have a pity party, moan and groan about what we don't have, in lieu of thanking God for what you do have.

Stop making excuses. Stop blaming others. Just Get Up...! Concentrate On Your Assets! Whenever you want something from the Lord, you've got to learn how to use what you have.

If you want to attract the attention of Heaven, and get over what you've been under, not only must you concentrate on your assets, but SECONDLY you must:

### 2. CONQUER PUBLIC OPINION (v)48-49)

You've got to learn how to turn a deaf ear to the opinion of folk. If you don't overcome the opinion of others, you will never get

to your destination. Don't allow yourself to get stuck at the bar of public opinion.

If Bartimaeus had listened to public opinion, he'd still be blind. We've got to learn how to Conquer Public Opinion...!

Whenever you are trying to move forward in the things of God, there are always folk (even church folk) trying to shut you up, stop your progress and abort your spiritual assignment.

You have to do what you've got to do In order to get through. You've got to press forward; because you've got something to get from God and in order to get it sometimes you've got to be persistent.

The only way Bartimaeus could get Jesus' attention was by crying out. You have to learn how to use what you got, persevere and Conquer Public Opinion.

Sometimes you've got to kick and swim until your cream turns to butter! I heard the old saints say, “If you keep on moving, your change will come.” You'll be able to get Jesus' Attention.

Not only should you concentrate on your assets and conquer public opinion, but FINALLY if you want to get over what you been under you must:

### 3. CAST OFF YOUR GARMENT (v 50-52)

In ancient times throughout the Middle East and even today, beggars wore what is called a camel's-tunic. It was a tunic made of camel's hair used as protection from the elements. When the beggars would sit by the roadside, they would cover themselves with the tunic to keep them cool in the sun and dry in the rain.

So when they told Bartimaeus in verse 49, “Be of good cheer. Rise. He is calling you..”, the first thing he did in verse 50, was throw off his camel's-tunic.

When you take off your outer garment, the real you is exposed. That's when Jesus can reach you; that's when Jesus can heal your infirmities and help you deal with your handicaps..!

When most folk have a handicap or an infirmity, they run to the doctor. But if you check the credentials of the doctor, you will discover that the doctor is someone who spent 8 years learning how to practice medicine.

But when you take off your outer garment, that's when Jesus can touch you, and you'll discover that He's more than a doctor; you'll discover that He's a Healer.

The doctor can only treat your handicap, but Jesus can heal you, not just physically, but spiritually! There's Power in the Name of Jesus!

When most folk run into trouble, they run and get themselves a lawyer. But if you check the credentials of the lawyer, you'll discover that the lawyer is someone that spent at least 4 years in law school learning how to practice law.

But when you take off your outer garment, that's when Jesus can come in the midst of your situation, move on your behalf and you will discover that He is more than a lawyer.

In fact John says that He is the Advocate; He is the Righteous One That stands in my place!

I don't know about you, but I'm going to Cast Off My Outer Garment...

I'm going to open myself up...So that Jesus can have His way...

I'm going to shout “Father I stretch...” Because when I stretch...

I'll be able to reach Jesus...!

And when I reach Jesus I'm sure to get over what I've been under.

## Heroes and Sheroes of the Church



### ORR Church Coordinator

Evangelist Sandi Collins is a visionary and radio and television host who can be heard every Thursday at 9:00 a.m. on WYZE 1480AM with a repeat of the broadcast at 9:00 p.m., spreading God's word and playing great gospel music. Her outreach ministry “Miracles, Miracles and More Miracles” reaches out to communities to help make an impact on its citizens. Throughout the years she has helped families with job placement, financial assistance, food, clothing and school supplies. She is a member of **Emmanuel Tabernacle** and champion for the Overground RR!!® with her support and promotion of the organization. Evangelist Collins can be reached at 404.441.1122 or miracles-reachout@aol.com. Prayer Line 678.526.7720.



### Deacon

Deacon Verdree Lockhart has been a member of **Zion Hill Baptist Church** since 1996. His role as a deacon is to be a helper to Reverend Dr. Aaron L. Parker with his duties. He has been a deacon for the past six years and has enjoyed his role as a servant of the church. Lockhart is also a part of the Outreach Ministry Team, the Brotherhood Ministry and he is also a student at the church's school. In the Outreach Ministry Team, Lockhart helps coordinate the other 35 ministries of the church. His favorite scripture is Psalm 23, The Lord's Prayer.



### Mother's Board

Ovella Bailey Jackson has been a member of **Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church** all of her life. She enjoys being the Coordinator for the Mother's Board and Senior's Ministry. Jackson is the wife of Deacon Robert Jackson and the Church Wedding Coordinator and with that service she is able to teach others about all the benefits of being a Christian woman, mother, wife, friend and teacher. Being an active member of the Mother's Board allows her to support the pastor with communion, baptism, prayer, time, talent and treasure.

Phil. 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ which strengthenth me.”



### Usher

Sister Lula G. Simpson has been a member of **Providence Missionary Baptist Church** for more than fifty years. Her love of children motivated her to teach Sunday School for twenty years. Under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Gerald L. Durley, Sister Simpson provided an opportunity for boys and girls from 7-18 years of age to serve during the 10:40 a.m. Worship Service. She teaches the Youth Ushers the doorkeeper signals (a silent method of ushering). She continues to be a faithful member of the Senior Usher Board and the director of the Lula G. Simpson Usher Board. She is an example of service and always encouraging the youth to follow.



### First Lady

Elect Lady Semequia Means, Co-Founder of **New Fountain Worldwide Ministries** is wife of Bishop J.D. Means, Sr. who is Senior Pastor. Elect Lady is a Psalmstress and Praise & Worship Leader Extraordinaire. She began singing at the age of 4, her first rendition was “He's Got The Whole World In His Hands.” Growing up at Central Holiness Church of Deliverance her spiritual guidance was received from Apostle J.T. Barnett and First Lady Evangelist Blondine Barnett, along with her grandparents, the late Bishop J.T. Stroud and Evangelist Jessie Louise Stroud.



### Auxiliary

Deaconess Sister Robin Edwards, is the leader of the Daughters of Hannah Ministry. She is a faithful and dedicated member of **Emmaus Road Missionary Baptist Church**, under the guidance of Rev. David Scott. We come together every third Friday of the month at 7:30pm, to discuss issues surrounding today's Black Woman in America. This is an open forum, open to women of Emmaus Road MBC and friends, neighbors, co-workers and our communities. We welcome all women to learn more about The Daughters of Hannah Ministry, kindly contact the church for more information at 770-964-7007.

To learn more about ORR church members, please visit [www.overgroundrr.com](http://www.overgroundrr.com)

# KENNY LEON'S 'FENCES' WINS THREE TONYS

## The Conductor

Winning awards is not new for Kenny Leon. His work has garnered many awards and accolades that are well deserved for the Atlanta-based director. His line of work has bridged generations for actors and viewers alike. This was proven in his production of classic play "Raisin in the Sun" starring Sean "Diddy" Combs, Sanaa Lathan, Phylicia Rashad and Bill Nunn. Now, Leon has brought another August Wilson play to the forefront of theatrics and it has taken critics and audiences by storm.

Leon and his production of August Wilson's "Fences", was recently nominated for 10 Tony Awards, the most nominations Leon has received for a play, and won three: Best Revival of a Play; Denzel Washington for Best Actor; and Viola Davis for Best Actress.

The story is set in Pittsburgh in the 1950s where the protagonist, Troy Maxson, is focused on his job as a garbage man and being the patriarch of his family. Although he is shown as someone who is hard-headed and not very familiar with showing affections, the passion he demonstrates in his frustration with son, Lyons and other family members and life situations proves that he is capable of emotions.

In Fences, Troy, the protagonist, is American in his hard work and family and even in his frustrations. Leon approached Wilson with a sense of reverence in how he chose who would

play which part, how the scene would carry out, and every meticulous part of the play was planned and worked to pay homage to the man who wrote it and the people it represents. "This revival of Fences is especially important

to me because I had the opportunity to work with August Wilson on his last two Broadway plays, "Gem of the Ocean" and "Radio Golf".

Wilson's plays revolve around the race relations that are in sync with the era of the plays. Leon has expressed his deep admiration for his late friend's ability to tell a story where not only African Americans can understand and benefit from the moral of the stories. Wilson had a knack of telling stories that encompassed every emotion: Fear, laughter, hurt and, most of all, love. This storytelling is one of the reasons Leon has been drawn to his work and it's the reason he continues to bring his work to an audience that understands and appreciates the stories.

Leon has been a longtime fan and admirer of Wilson and his craft and part of his mission in directing these plays is to reassure their roles in



Kenny Leon

KENNY LEON CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

**SOUTHWEST ARTS CENTER PRESENTS**  
**KENNY LEON'S**  
**true colors**  
**THEATRE COMPANY**

**BROKE- OLOGY**  
 By Nathan Louis Jackson  
 Presented by at&t

**Directed by Kenny Leon**

**Jan. 28 – Feb. 20, 2011**  
**Previews Jan 25, 26 & 27**

In accordance with Broke-ology – the science of being broke – the King family has learned to balance sacrifice and let love keep them together. Dad remains in his home even as his health and his neighborhood are deteriorating. When the question is raised of how to take care of their ailing father, the two brothers find themselves strangely at odds. **This family comic drama encourages us to stay linked to our roots no matter where life takes us.**

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# A.G.E.S. Arts Gospel Entertainment Sports

AGES is a section of the overground RR!! that is directed toward highlighting the Arts, Gospel, Entertainment and Sports areas of the African-American community. This page is dedicated to informing our readers about various entertainment aspects in Atlanta and surrounding cities. To learn how your church, business or organization can get involved, please contact The ORR!! office at 404-346-0808.

## ARTS



Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company announces the 2011 season. The season starts January 25, 2011 includes: Nathan Louis Jackson's comic drama Broke-ology, directed by Kenny Leon; The Colored Museum by George C. Wolfe, directed by Jasmine Guy; and Sam Sheppard's hit A Fool For Love starring Jasmine Guy. For season subscriptions call 1-877-725-8849; to make donations call LaTeshia Ellerson at 404-588-0308 ext. 203; for group discounts call Curtis King at 404-588-0308, ext. 201. www.TrueColorsTheatre.org.

## GOSPEL



When it comes to gospel music, inspirational speeches and community involvement, as well as, gospel concerts you will hear his name in the conversation. Who is he? Bobby Hurd. The Bobby Hurd show reaches an astonishing 50 million television viewers throughout the world on a weekly basis. In 2009 he was awarded The Spiritual Enlightenment Award from The Trumpet Awards. He is a faithful and dedicated member of Pilgrim Baptist Church led by Pastor Willie Bolden. You can watch The Bobby Hurd Show on Tuesday evenings at 10:00 p.m. on channel 57 WATC and listen to him on WYZE 1480AM on Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

## ENTERTAINMENT



Trumpeteer Joey Sommerville's musical essence lies in the Baptist church. "When I was a teenager, I would judge the caliber of my playing by the number of people in the congregation who 'got happy'. If you aren't touching the listener's soul, then you aren't really playing music. Soul communication is the key." He has performed and recorded with a wide range of artists including the mega-rock group Phish. He was the featured instrumental soloist on the Cirque du Soleil's Grammy-nominated and Juno Award-winning album, Alegria. He produced bassist/vocalist Rhonda Smith's "RS2" which features Prince, Sheila E. and gospel great, Fred Hammond. His latest musical offering, "Like You Mean It" is more than a title, it is a philosophy and code of conduct. "Whatever you do, do it like you mean it!" The album is a labor of love that is both passionate and a whole lot of fun at the same time. For booking info call 404.431.9232 or email collins@spencertyson.com.

## SPORTS



NBA All-Star Dikembe Mutombo, chairman and president of The Dikembe Mutombo Foundation (DMF) and star of the Houston Rockets, has long been dedicated to improving the health, education and quality of life for the people in his birthplace, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Created in Atlanta in 1997, DMF is attempting to eradicate many childhood diseases that have virtually disappeared in developed countries while those diseases are still life threatening to children in the Congo everyday. DMF is dedicated to improving the health, education and quality of life for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. DMF strives to accomplish this goal through an emphasis on primary health care and disease prevention, the promotion of health policy, health research and increased access to health care education for the people of the Congo.

To learn more about ORR church members, please visit [www.overgroundrr.com](http://www.overgroundrr.com)



# Business



## Go SmallBiz.com Takes Aim at Helping Entrepreneurs

**D**aniel and Lisa A. Streeter are independent contractors of Go SmallBiz.com which was founded by entrepreneur and NFL Hall of Famer, Fran Tarkenton. The Streeters are on a crusade to helping small business owners to protect, grow and increase their business and maintain their client base in this economy.

Mrs. Streeter's background is from the legal field with the U.S. Court of Appeals 11th Circuit and Lockheed Aeronautics's Legal Dept. and Mr. Streeter's background is from manufacturing and programming robotics field. Mr. and Mrs. Streeter have been awarded as third in the nation by their company for helping small business owners with services needed in the small business arena and in their communities.

Go SmallBiz.com was founded because, having started 15 businesses since his football playing days, Fran Tarkenton has always had a passion for small business. After selling his international software company in 1994, Fran decided to pursue his desire of helping entrepreneurs, like himself, gain access to the tools and information they need to grow and compete in the new economy. The result was the Fran Tarkenton Small Business NETWORK, founded in 1996. Once the organization started using the Inter-

net as a primary delivery tool, the name was changed to Go SmallBiz.com.

Since August of 1997, Go SmallBiz.com has responded to every question asked by a business owner regarding running their business more effectively. The intent is to provide access to business consultants, so that the business owner can take advantage of knowledge gained by that consultant through years of experience. Go SmallBiz.com consultants might respond with advice, or an opinion or an expert reference. What sets Go SmallBiz.com apart is that the answer is specific to the question that was asked to help small business owners grow their business without worrying about issues.

Today, Go SmallBiz.com has grown to include more than 49,000 active members throughout North America. During this growth, the organization's mission has remained constant to help entrepreneurs run and grow their business, by providing access to a comprehensive body of knowledge and tools targeted specifically at the micro business.

Go SmallBiz.com is a provider of business consulting, resources and services designed to help entrepreneurs run and grow their business. You will have unlimited access to your Go SmallBiz



consultants for any business related matter or questions on business topics that includes: human resources, debt collections, legal, Internet, tax, accounting, marketing, finance, advertising, technology and general business questions and issues.

Go SmallBiz.com continues to build its resource library and makes that library available to any entrepreneur through its Web site [www.gosmallbiz.com](http://www.gosmallbiz.com). The library is organized according to subject matter category and within the category by type of data being delivered. In addition to articles, FAQ's and other written materials, Go SmallBiz.com provides access to a broad array of tools and many of the tools are available at no cost. A free directory listing on the Web site with online tools and others have been screened and approved for offer on the Tools & Resources section of each content channel.

Daniel and Lisa Streeter state: "We really don't think that business owners and people that [are] looking to start their own business know



Daniel and Lisa Streeter

of the help that they have at their finger tips to start, grow and protect their business. Go SmallBiz.com is an absolute leisure with all aspects of knowledge and help for small business owners so they can sleep at night. Our company is actually looking for business-to-business contractors needed for immediate placement for people to join us to make a living, while making a difference for small business owners and our community to level the legal playing field."

To learn more about our business and community members, please visit [www.overgroundrr.com](http://www.overgroundrr.com)

## Essential Legal says, "In Debt? Protect Yourself From The "Shady" Helpers"

**T**oday you are not alone in having trouble paying bills. You have tried to develop a budget and unsuccessfully worked out a repayment plan with your creditors and debt collectors. Now you are ready to go to the next level and seek professional help. But before you do business with any company, check it out with your state Attorney General, local consumer protection agency, and the Better Business Bureau. They can tell you if consumer complaints are on file about the companies you consider.

Here are some helpers and caution flags when dealing with them to ensure your financial situation does not go from bad to worse:



**Credit Counseling:** Many credit counseling organizations are nonprofit; but there are no guarantees that their services are free, affordable, or even legitimate. In fact, some organizations charge high fees - which may be hidden - or urge consumers to make "voluntary" contributions that can cause more debt. Reputable credit counseling organizations can advise you on managing your money and debts, and offer free educational materials and workshops. Their counselors are usually certified and can help you develop a personalized plan to solve your money problems. Be wary of credit coun-

seling organizations that won't send you free information about the services they provide without requiring you to provide personal financial information, such as credit card account numbers, and balances.

**Debt Management Plans:** If your financial problems are very serious, a credit-counseling agency may recommend that you enroll in a debt management plan (DMP). A DMP alone is not credit counseling, and are not for everyone. You should sign up for a DMP only after a certified credit counselor has spent time thoroughly reviewing your financial situation, and has offered you customized advice on managing your money. In a DMP, you deposit money each month with the credit counseling organization, which uses your deposits to pay your unsecured debts according to a payment schedule the counselor develops with you and your creditors. Your creditors may agree to lower your interest rates or waive certain fees, but check with all your creditors to be sure they offer the concessions that a credit counseling organization describes to you.

**Debt Negotiation Companies:** Again, these companies may be "nonprofit," but not necessarily legitimate. There also is no guarantee that a creditor will accept partial payment of a legitimate debt. In fact, if you stop making payments on a credit card, late fees and interest usually are added to the debt each month. If you exceed your credit limit, additional fees and charges also can be added. This can cause your original debt to double or triple. What's more, most debt negotiation companies charge consumers substantial fees for their services.

SHADY HELPERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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### KENNY LEON CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

the fabric of America. African Americans are sometimes displayed as outsiders in a land/nation that they've played a tremendous part in creating. However, Leon is sure that once the audience grasps the meaning and emotion of Fences, and any other Wilson art piece, they two – African Americans and America – will inevitably become one. "I want [the audience] to feel more of that which is America. I want them to feel that America is theirs too, no matter who they are. You have all the rights and privileges of that which is America."

In Atlanta's Southwest Arts Center and the Alliance Theater, where Leon was the artistic director from 1988-2000, the Kenny Leon True Colors Theatre is performing a production of "Jitney" to a wide range of audiences throughout the city. The story is centered on the owner and employees of a Pittsburgh car service where the drama unfolds in the shop and their lives.

Leon is sure that Wilson would have stood in awe of the actors and would most definitely have been grateful to their powerful, heartfelt performances. "To get to work with actors that I know August would love to have tackled his work; Denzel Washington, Viola Davis, Michael J. Williamson, I think he would really be overjoyed with the work they're doing on the stage so I'm really proud of this production of Fences and really blessed for the team of actors and designers," Leon exclaims. "It really means a lot to me that the Tony nominating committee decided to nominate us for 10 Tony awards. It's pretty amazing."

Wilson's stories have often told of how love can be at the root but in the African-American community especially, there are many walls that don't allow love to shine through the

pain. "Fences" is one of those stories that love is a fundamental part of the story but tough love can sometimes be too harsh. "I'm just really proud to have been associated with August Wilson and I'm really proud that the rest of the world is paying attention to his writing and his work. I'm hoping that young folk carry his work into the next generation so that it's in our school systems, colleges and that every American is reading August Wilson," the Florida native states. "It makes me extremely proud in helping to perpetuate the life and writings of August Wilson."

"I think August Wilson was the greatest playwright of my generation. He was a gift to America. He wrote 10 amazing plays, Fences being one of them," Leon says. "No other American has done that, and nine of those 10 plays have gone on to have Broadway productions – "Jitney" being the only one that hasn't had a Broadway production."

With Leon's admiration to Wilson and other greats in the world of theater, one can only hope that he realizes his own significance in the genre as well. His contributions have allowed him accolades and numerous awards. The theater community can only hope to see more of what he has to offer. With confidence it can be said that August Wilson, as well as the world of entertainment, would be proud. ■

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**Emanuel D. Jones**  
Owner



# Cascade Club Opens Doors to Elegance

The Conductor



The Cascade Club is prepared to host an elegant evening event.

“To whom much is given, much is required.” Jeffrey Riddle recalls this scripture, found in Luke 12:48, the best because that’s what his grandmother reminded him of most often. She engrained that in his heart and mind and he is constantly striving to live up to this on a daily basis.

Riddle has a knack for helping others. His job as a lawyer is to seek and fight for justice for those who find themselves in need of legal assistance. However, the courtroom is not the only place he succeeds. He is the owner of Cascade Club at 2890 Continental Colony Pkwy., S.W. in Atlanta.

“I saw there was a need for a place where African Americans could get to a place to network and oftentimes your network can improve your net worth. We needed a place that’s safe, clean and affordable,” he recalls. “We always talk about the Talented Tenth and those who are afforded certain things. But we’ve become so myopic that we go to our nice suburban homes or our nice communities and lock the door and live in a vacuum.”

The Cascade Club facility was built in 1955 and started as a golf course that later was an Elk’s Lodge. Years later, Omega Psi Phi fraternity bought the building and was known to host gatherings that included fund raisers, parties and other events. In 2007, Riddle was the fourth owner of the facility and he has renovated, reinvented and transformed it into a place of elegance fit for a wedding, brunch, concert or any other event that it can hold.



Jeffrey Riddle, owner of the Cascade Club.

“The Cascade Club has enjoyed partnerships with local churches and several businesses including Coca-Cola and State Farm and churches such as Cascade United Methodist Church, Ben Hill (UMC), Zion Hill, Word of Faith, Clarkston First Baptist and many more. So we are committed to making ourselves a community resource and community partner,” Riddle reflects.

Since acquiring the facility, Riddle has been quite pleased with the warm reception he’s received from the community and organizations with the business he’s gotten. Nevertheless, he has seen and felt some hit from the recession. He also presses that his busiest season of the year are the summer months where there

are numerous couples who choose the venue as the spot to say their vows as well as host the receptions.

“I believe that those of us who have been afforded certain comforts, education and life should give back to the community,” he states. Riddle has indeed opened the doors of the Cascade Club for a broad range of community organizations and businesses to host their fund raisers and

events. Upstairs there is a room with a dance floor, and downstairs there are weekly Sunday gospel brunches hosted by radio station V-103 disc jockey, Larry Tinsley, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.; a room with hard-wood floors, projector and bar area is ready to house your party, banquet, meeting or any other event. On the back lawn, there is a grand walkway that any bride would love to be her entry, which parts a lawn to hold more than 500 guests.

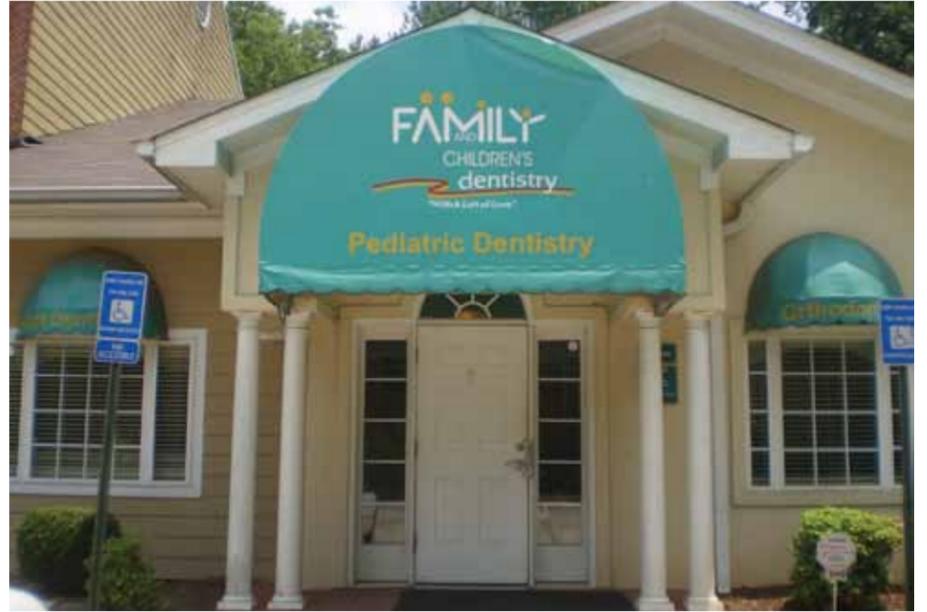
“Hopefully, our busy season is the whole year but we really pick up during the wedding season, which is May until September and then again for the holiday season,” he recalls. “Throughout the year we have birthdays, receptions, retirement parties and the like.” Regardless of the successes, the club has also faced its share of low points as well.

Riddle states how they’ve had to cut a few corners for some of the venues’ customers to make their vision of hosting an event at the Cascade Club happen. “We’ve had to do recession specials where we’ve worked with customers in the form of a payment plan and other obligations. Thankfully, we have the business of our people – despite the recession – who want to get out and have a good time.”

The venue can hold between 750 – 1,000 guests and is chameleon-like in the ways the landscape and interior can be arranged to suit your event. Riddle, who also owns law firms in Chicago and Atlanta, says that he would love to see more theme-related parties come to Cascade Club.

New to the venue is a Tuesday comedy night where comedians from all over will bring laughs and good times to the people of Atlanta. The evening of fun will be hosted by Atlanta’s own comedian, Bruce-Bruce. “I would like to do more theme parties. Monthly theme parties where there is a different concept, different activities. So people can really have a place they can call their own in the community. We want to do more concerts. We’re on 12 acres of land.”

Riddle keeps his grandmother’s ideals and favorite scripture close to his heart and deep in his mind when he makes business decisions. “When the vast majority of our community is living in poverty . . . I believe a venue like the Cascade Club is enticing to the haves and the have nots. Regardless of your economic status, we’ll give you the same amount of respect, service and care that you deserve, regardless of what your bank account looks like.” ■



Family and Children’s Dentistry office is on 2440 Fairburn Rd. Dr. Keneta Lott says her dentistry involves teaching children and parents about the significance of oral health.

# A ‘Lott’ of Love Keeps Dental Patients Coming

The Conductor

Family and Children’s Dentist office owner, Dr. Kaneta Lott, DDS is careful to express that what she does requires her to be more than a dentist, but a teacher. Growing up with a mother who was a teacher, her ability to teach came from the heart. She is constantly preparing her patients for a lifestyle of healthy teeth and living. More than two decades ago, Lott founded the Family and Children’s Dentistry in Atlanta and Greensboro, Georgia.



Dr. Kaneta Lott

“I think it’s my forte. My mother was a kindergarten, first and third grade teacher. She went from first grade to third grade to kindergarten,” the Mobile, Alabama native says. “[My siblings and I] always had to help out. It was just a part of my growing up – to be around children.”

Her own schooling in dentistry is what brought her to Atlanta. “I graduated from dental school in 1981 and I practiced for a year and then I decided that I wanted to specialize in children’s dentistry,” she recalls. Lott’s dentistry training was at Scottish Rite Hospital. Now, 26 years later, Lott is still practicing dentistry and teaching parents and youth from all over the city how to maintain their oral health.

“We have to do a lot of teaching here. I am a teacher, whether I’m a dentist or not, I really am a teacher because all day long what I’m talking about is how to prevent decay. How to put a child to bed . . . without a sippie cup, non-traumatically. Everything I do all day long is educational.” Despite its complexities, Lott is working passionately to lessen the amount of tooth decay that she attributes to parenting skills or the lack thereof. She notes that a sippie cup, that are mostly filled with sugar-loaded juices and sodas, are wreaking havoc on children’s teeth and dietary habits. This is now a part of her mission.

The teacher that her mother was shows up when Lott talks about how your physical health starts with oral health. “When I tell you that I feel more like a teacher, that’s what I feel like,” she says. “But it’s good though.” The Family and Children’s Dentistry, PC: With a “Lott” of

Love, has six dentists on site that offer pediatric dentistry, orthodontics and full adult care; including cosmetic care all the way to dentures. Her preference is working with children and helping parents with their children’s teeth.

One of Lott’s great uncles in Tuscaloosa, Ala. sparked a flame in her to go into the dental profession. She would sometimes go to his office, that was conveniently located in his home, and watch him work. However, right out of college she took another route and became the chief medical technologist of an Atlanta hospital. Nevertheless, her passion and roots led right back to dentistry. She realizes today that her uncle guided her path to the future she’s living presently. “It would always fascinate me, what he did,” she recalls. “His lifestyle was pretty cool. I thought, ‘hmmm, that makes sense.’ I have not regretted one bit.” Although he never got to see her become a dentist, Lott recognizes that he played a very significant role in her life. Not only as family, but as a professional.

Since her start, Lott is very proud of the strides that have come in the profession. She even states that more than 50 percent of dental schools are made up of female students. “I think it all has to do with lifestyle,” she says. “They know that when they get out they can make a decent salary, they can still manage their own life [and] they can go to work when they need to.” She states that this flexibility allowed her to be a successful mom, wife and dentist.

Today, Lott has not only made an impact professionally and in her community, she has made a personal impact on her family. Lott’s daughter, Kimberly Beale is an orthodontist in her mother’s office. She also has a son who followed in the footsteps of his father, well-known Atlanta attorney Thomas Cuffie, and became a lawyer. “You know I wanted both of them,” she says laughingly.

In five to ten years Lott sees herself as retired and taking care of her garden. Her work will speak for itself and the path that she’s made has touched thousands of patients and young and seasoned dentists alike who’ve heard her speak at national and local conferences. Needless to say, Lott is continuing her legacy with the work she’s doing within the community, teaching others how to take care of their oral health and passing the torch to her children. Hers is a gift that keeps on giving. ■

To learn more about ORR church members, please visit [www.overgroundrr.com](http://www.overgroundrr.com)

**CAR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2**

backyard of the terrorists for 400 years, first on the plantations, then in the ghettos even to this very day. Our kidnappers completely separated us from any recollection of whom we were. We became who they wanted us to be. To a large extent we remain who they want us to be.

We exist under a false belief that we are free. Similarly to Dugard, in our present state of mind, our "freedom" serves only to increase the wealth and desires of other communities, to our communal detriment.

Our "freedom" is to be mindless consumers quickly losing the hard-fought gains of the generation of Maynard Jackson. This is a "Jaycee Dugard" form of freedom craftily designed when we received affirmative action and not reparations.

**WE MUST DELIVER OURSELVES TO FREEDOM**

A growing knowledge of The Truth compels us to resume the arduous trek to freedom started by our people. This epic trudge has continued to the point of freeing us from Jim Crow Slavery. Now, we must finish this journey to real freedom. We cannot do it under a distorted perception of who and why we are. It can only happen if we choose to embrace the ugly and beautiful Truth. It is in this exciting and courageous spirit that The Overground RR!!® has been created.

No community can control its destiny, provide for its people, or care for its children without strong and vibrant businesses owned by members of that community. Our businesses cannot be strong and vibrant without support from our community. There are two basic problems hindering the growth of Black businesses:

1. Lack of awareness in the community that the business exists; and
2. Perception that the products and services are inferior to those provided by businesses owned by members of other communities.

For our people to be aware of the businesses in our community, a central business directory is necessary. It must be a directory which is continuously updated and broadly

circulated throughout the community.

As with any great Black movement, the church is an essential element. Just as we've seen our people delivered from physical slavery, and Blacks rise to positions previously believed to be impossible, the time has arrived for Black churches, businesses, institutions and community organizations to come together. The Overground RR!!® has been uniting churches and mosques along with businesses and community organizations since 2001. More than 70 churches and one mosque are now part of the ORR.

To address the perception that the products and services of Black businesses are inferior, ORR businesses commit to binding arbitration as a condition of membership. If disputes cannot be resolved between businesses and consumers, then the latter has the option of having the dispute mediated by an arbitrator outside of the ORR. This arbitration is provided at no cost to the consumer or the business. Business members of the ORR can be suspended or disbarred. Now, that's accountability.

To promote the ORR business directory, the ORR has evolved into a unique communications network. In addition to the Conductor newspaper, it publishes an e-newsletter called SPARKS. Subscriptions are free. Simply call 404-346-0808, or e-mail us at info@overgroundrr.com. Or you can register on the web site: www.overgroundrr.com.

The Conductor is distributed to more than 562 distribution locations. For each issue fifty thousand copies are printed. The Conductor has grown to have the 3rd largest circulation per issue in the State of Georgia. Businesses now have an extremely effective and inexpensive means to advertise their business.

The ORR Business Directory ("OBD") is becoming the central business directory of the Atlanta Black community. It is an essential tool for our community to change the economic landscape which was designed to keep our businesses on the bottom. Affirmative action (without reparations) was designed for us to send the money we earn out of the community as soon as we receive it.

But this is changing. ORR Consumers are directed to the OBD by the churches, businesses

and community organizations. It is published in The Conductor (see the pull out center pages and on the webiste. Directory referrals are also available from the ORR staff.

Now, the Overground RR!!® is launching new incredibly exciting programs: The ORR Freedom Stands and ORR Youth Banking Centers ("OYBC"). There have never been such innovative initiatives. Like all ORR activities, the Freedom Stands and ORR Youth Banking Centers are designed to enhance the economic health of the Black community while promoting the activities of the churches and community organizations.

To remind us to practice Kitchen Table Affirmative Action (KTAA), ORR Freedom Stands provide a continuous presence in member churches. The Freedom Stands identify the churches as stations on the Overground RR!!® and their pastors as the "Conductor" of that station. For example, on the Cascade United Methodist Church (UMC) floor stand, Rev. Marvin Moss is presented as the Conductor for that station.

And the excitement for the ORR Youth Banking Centers can hardly be contained. Determined to reclaim our youth, the ORR is committed to ending financial illiteracy. To accomplish this, ORR churches will open OYBC. Through this program ORR members Citizens Trust Bank and Capitol City Bank & Trust Company will have teller booths in the churches.

The goal is to for every child which is part of an ORR church to have a bank account. Instead of having \$200 in the sneakers on their feet, each child at early ages will be taught to have the money in the bank, being used to build their futures instead of being wasted on unnecessary overpriced clothing. The OYBC program will include educational seminars for both the children and the adults.

Additionally, this upcoming Black History Month will be different from all others. ORR churches citywide will be promoting Black businesses. During this Black History Month the ORR Churches will be making Black history instead of talking about the history made by others.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. We, as a people, must learn and face the truth. Much of the truth is the story of horrendous terrorism against us by Whites. However, much of the truth is amazingly beautiful and inspiring. It is amazingly inspiring how our people (many still living today) faced the ugly truth imposed upon them and changed it into a beautiful legacy of not just surviving, but overcoming.

Like the Underground Railroad, the Overground RR!!® is delivering our people to freedom. If you are a business owner, by joining the ORR for just \$1 a day, you vastly increase the likelihood that the community will be aware of your business.

Before you put this paper down, pull out the ORR business directory to start implementing your own personal program of KTAA. If you patronize a Black business which is not an ORR member, take the paper to the business and get it on board. Make sure your church is part of the ORR, as well as any community organization you are involved in.

This is what we must do at this moment with the ugly truth which we face. It is the only way we will truly be free. Do you want to be free? If so, get on board!!! ■



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# Church

## GARDENING FOR A HEALTHIER FLOCK

### Providence Grinds New “Ground” During Earth Week Celebration

By Jeremy House

Dressed modestly in pale jeans and a fashionably beige hat, Lyndsy Collins pressed through gloomy weather, dead set on her mission at Providence Missionary Baptist Church (MBC). She had just been awarded a \$7,500 grant from the Atlanta Families group for her talent inside the classroom. Collins teaches science at the Coretta Scott King Young Women’s Leadership Academy in Atlanta—the place where she envisions placing the school’s first student-run garden—a process Collins hopes will inculcate lessons about the environment and health.

After the Atlanta Families’ Awards for Excellence in Education ceremony, in which Collins and 12 other educators were honored for increasing student achievement and fostering community partnerships, Collins was excitedly greeted by supporters who pointed her to Providence Missionary Baptist Church where she would meet willing partners in her quest to build a school garden.

At the time, Providence MBC was celebrating the final day of Earth Week by publicly declaring its urban garden ready for operation. Church members and community residents alike joined the church as it touted a new commitment to growing a healthier flock.

Under the proposed plans, the community garden will reap crops such as okra, tomatoes and beans. Also, several fruit trees are soon to be planted. Coupled with a green house, lunch tables and a compost pile, the garden represents a modern model of urban farming. Even more important, is how the church plans to use the green space.



Rev. Gerald Durley

“We [want to] raise a generation that knows firsthand that food comes from a seed [and] not Kroger,” declared Jeffrey Hicks, the coordinator of the project. The entire project was the idea of this Providence church member and savvy businessman, who currently serves as the president of Empire Realty located in the historic West End district. A garden already exists on his home property. It was one of the first serious steps Hicks took to uplift his health.

Hicks predicts that a shared commitment between the community and church will cement this green space as a community staple, “When the community starts eating out that garden, they’re going to protect it.”

Hicks led the fundraising efforts to clear two empty church lots, once planned to be a construction site for a new church building. For years, residential complaints complicated the building’s construction and Hicks turned to developing the lots into gardens to grow food for the community. After clearing the lot, Hicks prompted Eugene Cook, a prominent Urban Agriculturalist, to design the garden.

The idea didn’t meet much protest. Providence MBC has a long history of supporting causes related to environmental movement. Senior Pastor Gerald Durley, who was recently declared cancer free, is a rightful member of the army of justice. As former president of the advocacy group Concerned Black Clergy, trained

at the historical Ebenezer Baptist Church, the home church of slain Civil Rights legend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Durley long ago embraced the causes of environmental concerns.

Durley established Earth Week as a permanent component of the church’s ministry. First lady of Providence MBC, Muriel Durley, formed the church committee dubbed the Green Team. Volunteers to this committee have a dedicated mission to “develop awareness on behalf of the environment.”

On the last day of Earth Week, this mixture of concern for the environment and the promises of urban farming, reeled in a diverse conglomerate of groups and individuals looking to support and learn about Providence’s garden project. Providence’s Green Team organized a small convention of environmentally conscious groups and entrepreneurs.

Amongst the crowd was the Atlanta University Center’s SEED, a Morehouse student-founded group which gave away energy-efficient light bulbs; the Georgia Forestry Commission; and the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance. Collins arrived with the specific intention of touching base with popular agricultural entrepreneur Farmer D, owner of Farmer D Organics. Along with aid from the Captain Planet Foundation, Farmer D helped gather the organic materials necessary to launch the church garden.

Interestingly enough, Farmer D was accompanied by Stephanie Bernstein, founder and CEO of To Go Ware, a company that takes commonly disposed products and transforms them into reusable home and travel essentials.

Now that the garden has been built, Hicks is busy planning the next stage of the project.



Providence MBC’s garden was grown to learn and teach healthful living and environmental productivity.

Soon the produce from the garden will be incorporated into the feeding schedule of Providence’s Food House where the church feeds needy families every Friday.

Before that step, Hicks wants to train church volunteers, specifically the church youth, to grow basic crops. Instead of sending kids down the road of bad habits, he wants the youth introduced early to the alternatives to unhealthy snack foods. Now, everyone is holding their breath as Hicks competes for a contract with the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Women’s Health to identify women and children at risk for obesity and utilize the garden to deliver hands-on training on healthy vegetarian food preparation and gardening.

“It’s about health,” exclaims Hicks who conquered his battle with obesity due in part to highly nourishing, low-fat food grown in his yard. “Live bodies need live food.” ■

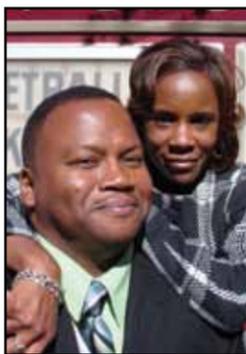
## BEN HILL CHRISTIAN CHURCH: UPLIFTING A COMMUNITY, BRIDGING A GAP

By Angelina T. Velasquez

For any person to turn their life over to the Lord is an acceptance of a grand responsibility, even more so for those who choose to devote their lives to assisting others to also surrender their lives and build a relationship with the Lord.

This is a calling that not all are privy to, however, for those who are it is the most fulfilling and life altering event of their lives. Minister Walter S. Poole, Sr. of Ben Hill Christian Church is a prime example of how allowing the Lord to be in control can shift your life in ways unknown. Whether an individual is brought up with church roots, or has to discover their faith and beliefs as they navigate through life, God leaves out no one.

“I’ve always loved the Lord, but growing up I was not very religious. My family went to church maybe once a month if we were lucky; however, my mom had, and still does have, a very strong relationship with God, which I was able to see as a child. As a minister here at Ben Hill I am about a relationship with God,



Rev. Walter S. Poole, Sr.

and the only way to satisfy that relationship is the Bible – that is why he gave it to us,” Poole said of his mothers’ religious influence on him.

Poole describes his state of mind on religion during his childhood as a bit scrambled, due to the fact that his father believed in the Nation of Islam which it came with a level of religious suppression. But it seemed that this never caused conflict for their family.

A passion of his is to share the need to do more for the Lord and not to constantly expect Him to do for us in a give-give relationship. The loyalty that is shown to the Lord is the same that transpires in the relationships that are shared with spouses and friends; loyalty begins with God.

Though many of his childhood moments shaped him into a young man that showed callousness where compassion should have been, it was not until his experience in the military that the exposure to the world began to crack what was once an impenetrable outer shell. “Like most young people I got to a point where I had to have the ‘realist’ view because I am a ‘realist’,” Poole said about his religious stance before joining the military.

“The military broadened my horizons. It gave me the opportunity to see that in many ways we, the world, think in similar ways. No matter where you are, people look to God,” Poole said in regards to the Lord becoming more prevalent in his life. It is then that a true shift began to take place in his life during Desert Storm, in 1991 while in the U.S. Air Force.

“I fell in love with God because of what Jesus did for me and for creation. So, [in 1991] I made a devotion to loving God back and that is what I preach. My mission has been to communicate God. I always prayed that God would use me, not necessarily as a preacher, but to just use me,” Poole said.

The journey from not having one particular religion that he clung to with faith, to having his life fully devoted to the Lord is only the work of the Lord.

His devotion to the Lord has not only shaped his life but also the lives of his wife and their five children. In many ways it has made them better partners for each other, as well as granting them the ability to instill religious teachings and beliefs in their children along with those that they have taken in as their own children.

Ben Hill has a fellowship that resembles a real family within a community. It is a hope that the church will continue to prosper while spreading the word of God. The church also has many community outreach ministries alongside a youth ministry that promotes positivity while embracing group involvement in a religious but fun setting.

Poole is strongly devoted to the uplifting of his community and of his people. The thought of

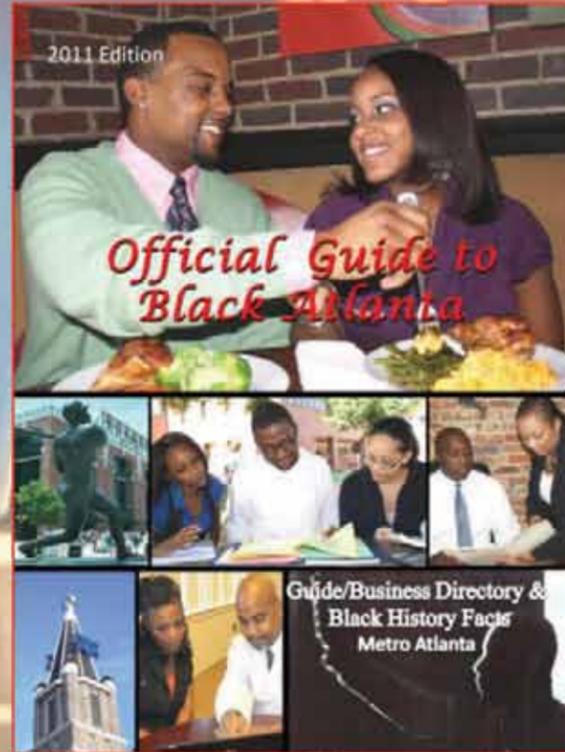
BEN HILL CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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# TEACHABLE SPIRIT: REV. DR. RICHARD COBBLE SHARES SCRIPTURE READING LESSONS

The Rev. Dr. Cobble, president of the Concerned Black Clergy, shares a research document with *The Overground RR!!* readers. Rev. Cobble discusses using inclusive language for daily scripture. Please take a look at what his students are learning about the Bible and other spiritual and religious topics.



Rev. Dr. Richard Cobble

## SUBJECT: Using Inclusive Language for Daily Scripture Reading.

A. INTRODUCTION: Current hatred and divisiveness among many of our community environments should encourage Christians to engage in a nationwide movement that fosters greater cooperation and improved understanding that God is Love, God is Inclusive, and God is Growth and Development. Usage of the pronoun "He" in referring to God's gender restricts this understanding. Reflections from Ruth Duck's book, *Gender and the Name of God* calls Religious Studies and/or practices into a search for Christian unity and the search for inclusiveness. She further asserts that such awareness should be based on desires for better community development, whereas, the possibility of each person and all people can be realized in seeking harmony and mutuality.

Therefore, the Reference Listing provides an arena for community leaders to explore and/or examine joint efforts for the use of inclusive language in the reading of scripture. Such awareness should serve as a foundation for introducing the use of inclusive languages for interpretation of Scripture that should bridge gaps of current hatred and divisiveness. Hearing the Reverend Doctor Barbara Lewis King opening her prayers with "Father/Mother God" reminds us that reading scripture should be infused with this practice. Doctor Barbara is the Senior Pastor of Hillside International Chapel and Truth Center in Atlanta, Georgia. This understanding of God in both masculine and feminine awareness is very much noticeable in the prayers of the Reverend Doctor Ndugu Tofori-Atta who is a Professor Emeritus of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) of Atlanta, Georgia.

This moment is used to explore and/or examine various religious textbooks used in religious studies to determine ways and means for using inclusive language that should create a greater interest for people to engage learning challenges for Christian unity. Having mutual relationships should create the need for immediate change. And this ought to permit visionary quests for knowledge and the practicality of creating greater interest for improving their religious understanding. Rather than reading daily scripture passages using traditional wording, people are encouraged to read using inclusive language. In the universal understanding that the name of God is neither masculine nor feminine, especially in Hebrew, scripture passages ought to be recited in the vernacular that identify daily living with all people.

In an effort to create examples, the following scripture passages are put forth to show that they can be read in the use of inclusive language:

### The Old Testament:

*Psalms 103*  
*Psalms 104*  
*I Samuel 3; Isaiah 6*  
*Jeremiah 1*  
*Lamentations 3*

This experiment of using the New Testament writings such as the Gospel - Luke 1: 46-55; and, the Gospel - John 6 are also considered. One can also employ the experiment of using the writings from the Epistle - Romans 8: 28-39 and Epistle Philippians 4. Nevertheless, the listed references are used to discuss introducing the use of inclusive languages that should provide possibilities for interesting and/or fascinating studies that should help to bridge families and communities.

B. DISCUSSION: This discussion will start off with the biblical observation recorded by Charles Curran in his book, *Catholic Social Teachings, 1891-Present*. Charles Curran cites the Bible, as well as the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible, as a primary source for catholic social teaching (page 2).

Although he maintains biblical source enhances the Roman Catholic social teaching, the use of inclusive language is not part of his agenda. However, Robert L. Platzner and Stephen L. Harris reveals, in their book, *The Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, that the Old Testament teaches about the Nature of God and the purpose of human life profoundly influence standards of behavior, and assumptions about ultimate reality (page 1). Throughout their book, they failed to acquaint the reader that scripture references to God should inculcate

the use of inclusive languages. Another point of consideration is that they failed to reveal that their background study in the Hebrew language attest that the name of God is neither masculine nor feminine.

When reviewing Mary Pat Fisher's seventh edition of her book, *Living Religions*, one may detect her attempts to make the name of God inclusive. Pages 1-11, she refers to God as the "Greater Reality", "An invisible sacred reality", "Supreme Reality", "Unseen Reality", "Eternal Reality", and "Sacred Reality or Sacred Being". Her observation also reveals that throughout history, many religious authorities have used their exclusive dogma and/or doctrine to cite their claim that they worship the only true deity. And this is done without understanding that indescribable things in different languages has evolved into whole of one's existence that includes the male and female aspect of God. Mary Pat Fisher validates this understanding on page 288 of her book.

However, in Lawrence Boadt's book, *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*, the Roman Catholic "Statement of Biblical Interpretation" (Written by Pope Pius XII, 1943), caution one to understand that ancient writers did not always employ those forms or kind of speech which are used in today's reality (page 13). In other words, ancient writings must be understood in the forms and/or kinds of speech used by people of past history. J. Alberto Soggin made this observation known in the revised edition of his book, *The Old Testament: From Its Origins to the Closing of the Alexandrian Canon* (page 5).

Soggin puts forth that centuries of exegesis loaded with preconceptions can lead either to uncritical acceptance of certain unproved assertions, or, paradoxically, to an equal uncritical rejection of particular position simply because they have traditionally been sustained within the sphere of the religious community. The truth of this subject that for centuries, the name of God has been referred to "him" or "he", when in the true understanding of the Hebrew language, the name of God should be recited using inclusive wordings. Taking Soggin's observation into consideration, interpreting scripture passages using inclusive language, thereby, making biblical literature obvious to all folks could enhance one to formulate, and/or embrace critical views in their advance religious studies that a personal loving God could be embraced as "Father and Mother God".

In discussing indigenous sacred ways of religions, Mary Pat Fishers reveals on page 40 of her book, *Living Religions* that the "Supreme Being" is often referred to by male pronouns. But! She goes on to reveal that in other groups, the "Supreme Being" is a referred to as a female,

while there are those, who make no distinction between male and female pronoun. They simply see the Divine as androgynous, stimulating the qualities of two opposing forces combined into one. Members of the academic community place high values on truth and honesty as one pursuit knowledge, perhaps the use of inclusive language will result in greater understanding for use of inclusive language.

C. SUMMARY: The above discussion was made possible by the introduction of the above listed references of scholarly learning. Ruth Duck's book, *Gender and the Name of God* insists on immediate changes for religious studies and/or practices into that which brings about Christian unity and the search for inclusiveness. Although she further visionizes that such improvements would be better for community development, there are far reaching possibilities of personal growth that each person and all people can be realized in harmony and mutuality. Examining and exploring daily reading of scripture, one can achieve the possibility for using inclusive language in reading scripture passages should provide a sense of literary freedom. Secondly, this opportunity should expose people to challenge their awareness for accelerating their growth process and activating a perspective for improving the dignity and quality of human life. And thirdly, one should feel a new relationship of scripture being opened to and/or applied to all human beings.

Having such possibilities should aid people in breaking through the mental hinderance and/or blockages of their minds for evoking new ideas and open the context of new understanding.

Reflecting upon the writer of Psalms 104, Pat Fisher's observation readily identifies with perception that the writer of this psalm. On page 40 of her book, *Living Religions*, she draws from the belief of southern and central Africans' understanding that much emphasis tends to be placed on the transcendent dimensions of everyday life and doing what is spiritually necessary to keep life going. Reading Psalms 104, one can detect that the writer is expressing some deep seated human realities, which happening around him in his daily living. Just as Pat Fisher capture the indigenous worldview, as portrayed in her recorded African experiences, the writer of this Psalm seems to reflect that the understanding of God is a universal experience for people of the earth.

Just as the writer of Psalm 104 expresses "High Praises" for his personal and natural experiences with God, this understanding is

SCRIPTURE CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

## BEN HILL continued from page 9

a strong race, such as African-Americans, being oppressed is a concept he finds hard to fathom. He believes that there is so much more that we, as a people, can do to contribute to this world if only we would help one another starting with our communities.

"There are tons of serving opportunities in this ministry because we believe in trying to make a difference in our community," Poole said.

Churches have long been a staple in African-American communities but with each generation there is a loss in religious traditions that desperately need to be passed along - families must get back to the church. Ben Hill is a family with many elders, pastors, ministers and members that have open arms for those that are ready. ■

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# DR. KAM REACHING MILLIONS ON THE FIRST GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

By Angela Harmon

Affectionately known as the Road Warrior of Gospel for his seven year run on WIGO, Georgia's first African American radio station; his voice has been heard on radio stations from 97.5 to 107.9 and as the co-host of the Larry Young morning show for over 3 years. Dr. Kameron Stevenson is now reaching millions throughout the world on the first global communications network, OVNTV.com. OVN TV offers a free cable service with HD and 3D technology with viewers in 129 countries around the world with offices in our very own downtown Atlanta.



Dr. Kam

Our guest range from local talents and celebrities to business owners, non profit executives, ministries, community and civic leaders, all provide some type of product, service or message that is a blessing and resource to the community.

Dr. Stevenson has a wealth of experience, talent, community ties and a vested interest in empowering Atlanta and our viewers throughout the world through mentoring, media and communications. Passionate about increasing literacy rates among our youth and community Dr. Kameron Stevenson formed Fresh Concepts.

Fresh Concepts programs and services are designed to address the literacy needs that are essential to the growth and development of individuals, families, businesses and the community at large. Programs include the Super Stars of Tomorrow, Today! Youth Reporters training opportunities to engage and expose

youth from in elementary and middle school to the world of journalism and media; and the Partners in the Community program which educates business owners on how to effectively grow their market share and provides low cost networking and marketing exposure at events, in print, outdoor, online, radio and/or TV.

Dr. Stevenson has received many awards and accolades over the past 20 years including a Proclamation from the State of Georgia and an honorary PhD from Mt. Carmel Theological Seminary in Fresno, CA; both, for his life time commitment to community service.

Fresh Concepts is a non profit organization formed in Atlanta, GA in 2010 and currently in the process of obtaining 501 (c) (3) status. Fresh Concepts empowers the youth and community through education, media and communications to increase literacy, community engagement and social awareness. Please visit [www.freshconcepts.com](http://www.freshconcepts.com) for more information, [www.ovntv.com](http://www.ovntv.com) for free cable and to view his show or email [radiokam@gmail.com](mailto:radiokam@gmail.com) for direct inquiries. ■

## SHADY HELPERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

**Credit Repair Clinics:** These companies appeal to consumers with poor credit histories, promising to clean up credit reports for a fee. But you already have the right to have any inaccurate information in your file corrected. And a credit repair clinic cannot have accurate information removed from your credit report, despite their promises. You also should know that laws prohibit these companies from charging you for their services until the services are fully performed. Only time and a conscientious effort to repay your debts will improve your credit report.

**Others:** Some companies guarantee you a loan if you pay a fee in advance. This may be illegal. It is true that many legitimate creditors offer extensions of credit through telemarketing and require an application or appraisal fee in advance. But legitimate creditors never guarantee that the consumer will get the loan — or even represent that a loan is likely.

In addition, some businesses may misrepresent the terms of a debt consolidation loan, failing to explain certain costs or mention that you're signing over your home as collateral. Businesses advertising voluntary debt reorganization plans may not explain that the plan is a bankruptcy filing, tell you everything that's involved, or help you through what can be a long and complex process.

**Personal bankruptcy** generally is considered the debt management option of last resort because this information stays on your credit report for 10 years and can make it difficult to obtain credit, buy a home, get life insurance, or sometimes get a job. Still, bankruptcy is a legal procedure that offers a fresh start for people who have gotten into financial difficulty and can't satisfy their debts. People who follow the bankruptcy rules receive a discharge — a court order that says they don't have to repay certain debts. If you believe that bankruptcy is an option for you, please contact us at Essentia Legal, P.C. for more information.

Finally, if you're thinking about getting help to stabilize your financial situation, do some homework first. Find out what services a business provides and what it costs, and don't rely on verbal promises. Get everything in writing, and read your contracts carefully. And remember, Essentia Legal is here to help. ■

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# ATLANTA SCHOOL BOARD MESS

**The Conductor**

Atlanta School Board members, all by themselves, have arranged to put in jeopardy the accreditation of all of our high schools. The high schools are on probation with the next possible step being lost of accreditation, because these adults have been playing power grab politics. Less than a year ago our school board (the same people) were getting awards for excellence, and our Superintendent won National Superintendent of the Year. This demise has nothing to do with the cheating scandal investigation, so how could this happen?

As I sat in the board room and watched the Board Chair's first public response after receiving the report and private briefing, I realized how this could happen. The new Chairman did not have a clue as to what the next leadership step should be after being asked three times. This is the same Chairman that publically attacked the President of the rating agency when he warned the Board of wrong doings, that will be causes for a review. Now, the only response the new chair has is "We are going to be partners with the accreditation agency and they promise to hold our hands through this", and that the board will be completely transparent. I am sorry but while holding hands is nice and transparency is good, however good leadership trumps all of that. Leaders meet with each other and get rid of problem blocks in the system that prevent success. They know how and when to call the right meeting and who to put in the room for results. Leaders do not hide behind current structure and policies when you have every elected official in the City and State

wanting this fixed now for the good. Leaders do not wait for a long drawn out 9 month process, they could fix in 3 months.

The Report clearly states that the problem started when the majority(5) changed the policies in order to power grab the leadership positions of the Board. This was done after the outside counsel hired by the Board Counsel and the State Attorney General advised that the actions of the Board majority were going against the Atlanta School System Charter. The Report also finds that the new Chair used his new position to obtain legal and public relation services from a private firm to help in the take over, and then turned around and attempted to give the firm a contract without going through the correct procurement process. The report goes on with other findings against board members that affect cooperation.

Some parents and grandparents would like to remove all of the Board members by a recall petition. However, I have another suggestion, since the board will be participating in a few workshops to improve their relationships, one goal could be to find who among them can garner 7 of the 9 votes for Chair and Vice Chair. This type of bold action is necessary and will end the 5/4 split that is causing the problem. Then the members could hold an election and move on.

Now that is my suggestion, but where is the leadership of the City? Where is every elected official in this City on this problem? It is not time to hide behind Turf issues when the future of our high school students is at stake. It is time for all hands on deck.

The Report gives Atlanta "up to September" to fix the problem and prove the fix. Lets set a goal to be off probation by May, so our rising Seniors are not scared all summer and we begin to lose our talent.

*"...the future of our high school students is at stake."*





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# Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials

## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR JUSTICE

By Kalin Thomas

As a black car slowly drives down the country Georgia road, it suddenly comes to a stop. All of a sudden, two Black couples are pulled out of the car by Klansmen with guns and rifles. They're screaming and trying to get away. One woman is pregnant. The couple is pulled down a dirt hill into a clearing where they are all shot dead, and the pregnant woman's unborn baby is cut from her stomach. There is a gasp from the crowd. The whole scene is very disturbing, but it's not real. It's a re-enactment of a true story – The Moore's Ford Bridge Lynching of 1946.

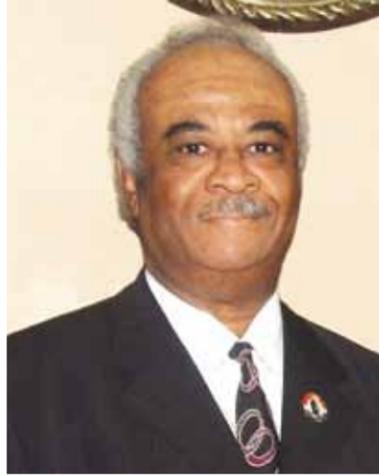
This is just one part of the annual Reenactment weekend in Monroe, Georgia; lead by Representative Tyrone Brooks, President of the Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials. He's been putting on this event for the last six years. "When I came to the [Southern Christian Leadership Conference] at age 20 I was assigned to Walton County, Georgia by Hosea Williams. That's where I found out about the Moore's Ford Bridge incident from Mr. Dan Young," he recalls. "The reenactment is designed to keep the case alive for the public. ...We asked Congressman John Lewis to introduce the Emmitt Till Bill to reopen cases like this that occurred before 1970. That bill is now law. And in 2000 Georgia Governor Roy Barnes ordered this case reopened at the state level and the GBI is still working on it.

When you are working for a just cause you will get support," said Brooks.

The Moore's Ford Bridge Lynching is just one of thousands of racial hate crimes done in the United States where the perpetrators were never brought to justice.

The weekend activities, which occur every July, included a pre-reenactment rally at First African Baptist Church. The special guest speaker was Bill Nigut, Regional Director of the Southeast Region of the Anti-Defamation League, and former reporter for WSB-TV. Nigut spoke of the Jewish involvement in the Civil Rights Movement and the historical relationship between African Americans and Jews. As part of his speech, Nigut said, "I think it's always important to remember hatred. My wife said this event is like Passover [is for Jews]. You recreate your history... so that you never forget it, you never forget!" The audience yelled "Never forget!" and ended with "Amen" and "Shaloms".

The rally was attended by members of the Atlanta, Monroe, and Social Circle commu-



Tyrone Brooks, GABEO President

nities, as well as out of town guests, including Professor Paula Johnson of Syracuse University College of Law. Syracuse started the Cold Case Justice Initiative (CCJI) in response to the 1964 murder of shoe shop owner, Frank Morris in Ferriday, Louisiana. Suspected Ku Klux Klan members forced Morris into his shoe shop at gunpoint and set the store on fire. He died of severe burns four days later. The case remains unsolved. Johnson and professor Janis McDonald developed the course, "Investigating and Reopening Unsolved Civil Rights Era Murders." Through this course, students will conduct investigations and research on unsolved cases, including the Moore's Ford Bridge Lynching case.

"The Emmitt Till Bill was passed in 2007 and the FBI was given \$10 million over an eight-year period to solve these cases. But they only solved a few cases and want to close the rest of the 109 cases on their list. But that list is not complete. Everywhere we go we have people telling us about family members who died under suspicious circumstances, and they are not

on the FBI list... So we must continue to fight, and I don't feel no-ways tired," said Johnson, referring to the popular James Cleveland gospel song.

Johnson was also in Atlanta in April at the "Never Too Late for Justice" event at Ebenezer Baptist Church to discuss this issue, where several family members of victims of racial crimes gave powerful and heart-wrenching stories about how their family members were killed by the Ku Klux Klan or other white supremacy groups/individuals. That event was appropriately closed out with Mavis Staples of the legendary Staples Singers getting the audience on their feet with freedom songs like "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize," "Marching Up Freedom's Highway," and the popular "I'll Take You There."

Rep. Brooks was also in attendance at the Ebenezer event where he said, "It's significant that this event is being held at Ebenezer. The Moore's Ford Lynching case was on Dr. Martin Luther King's agenda. He was planning to fly to Monroe the night he was killed in Memphis. Dr. Ralph Abernathy, Hosea Williams, Reverend Joseph Lowery, and Reverend Jesse Jackson, and Ambassador Andrew Young all came instead. So this event is reconnecting the church of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with one of the projects he had on his agenda."

JUSTICE – CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

## EIGHTH ANNUAL PURPLE BALL EVENT SPOTLIGHTS HONOREES

The Conductor

Not many leaders of the community, church and entertainment gather together in the same room to receive honors that place a much deserved spotlight on their accomplishments than at the Purple Ball.

The Eighth Annual Purple Ball, held at the Holiday Inn at 450 Capitol Avenue, has once again combined these various groups of people and bestowed upon them an honor that means more than just another trophy. Hosted by Evangelist Sandi Collins, this ceremony marks the contributions they've made to their genre, and more importantly, their communities.

Palmer Williams Jr., who plays Floyd the barber shop owner on the hit TBS sitcom by Tyler Perry, "House of Payne", was there to receive his award and he was sure to recognize the significance of the moment. He received the evening's Entertainment Award as someone who holds a successful entertainment career and keeps a strong spiritual foundation.

Collins, the founder of The Purple Ball and the outreach ministry Miracles, Miracles and More Miracles, was so proud of the event. "God showed me that this [event] was ordained. Anything that you're doing for [the] building of the kingdom, there's going to be some kind of attack," the evangelist states. "We did have some attacks and we thought that we weren't going to be able to meet to bless the [attendees] but the Lord made a way. Now we're able to do even more kingdom work."

Collins is also the host of a radio show on WYZE 1480AM that airs every Thursday from 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Upon her introduction, she danced her way into the Piedmont Ballroom of the Holiday Inn and then took her seat among the honorees. Each honoree was handpicked by Collins and she knew that they were the choices that were placed on her heart by God.

Other honorees were Chandra Currelley, of Tyler Perry Studios; Pastor Jasper Williams Jr., Senior Pastor of Salem Bible Church; General Larry Platt, civil rights activist and composer of the Web sensation and popular song, "Pants on the Ground"; and Elder Cal Merrell who is also known as "The Happy Preacher". There were 18 total honorees and all have made significant contributions to the local, regional, national and global communities.

The fashionistas of couture style, The Wilbourn Sisters, were on hand to give the audience a show of their classic and latest styles from their couture fashion line. The models came in all shapes, sizes and ages and they all catered to the everyday woman who might go to everyday events all the way to glamorous evening wear. There were colors that were reminiscent of shimmering diamonds, peacocks, animal



Palmer Williams, Jr.



Rev. Jasper Williams, Jr.

prints and other designs. They were also sure to have a few of their famous wrap dresses on hand, in which one sister, Janice, demonstrated the diversity of the style of dress with a quick rearrangement of material.

As the night went on, two of Collins' daughters sang a tribute to their mother that doubled as a testament of her faith. Tomika Collins, (Meeka-Meeka as she is affectionately called) co-hosts Collins' radio talk show with her every week. Chrissy Collins, who is a professional singer who sang backup with Beyoncé and works with Tyler Perry in his movies and some of his plays, was in attendance to participate. Margie Braswell, the oldest daughter, welcomed guests at the door. Elgintine Dudley, a God-daughter, and sister, Nora Wilson-Reed served as program directors. Evangelist Collins' granddaughters, niece, nephew and other family members worked together along with many others on the Planning Committee. The Purple Ball is truly a family affair.

Before the night was over, General Larry Platt gave the audience a performance of his popular "Pants on the Ground" song that became a hit after he performed it on an American Idol audition. Since then, Platt has been featured on local news shows and is a viral hit.

Even though the Purple Ball is a large part of Collins' heart, it's far from the peak of her ministry. She has many more goals she would like to accomplish and many more lives she wants to touch all in the name of God. Those who have experienced her love and embrace were there to share the evening and witness greatness in the honorees. "Seeing the accomplishments of some of my friends that have made it this year, knowing what they've gone through, we were able to celebrate together that they didn't go back to drugs or to an abused life." To see those that were less fortunate and see them there with their pretty gowns on, smiling and sitting at tables [was a miracle]."

Her outreach will soon go far beyond what others might see her as due to her moving forward with a vision that God has placed on her heart. "My goal is to have a temporary shelter for families and I see us getting closer and closer to that goal. As a matter of fact we're working on it right now." Collins' says that the main focus of the shelter that she wants to open is to keep families together. In many cases families are separated in shelters where the father or male has to go to an all men's facility and the women and children are in another "family" facility.

With these accomplishments in her pocket and many more visions to share, Collins has taken the city of Atlanta by storm. Not just any storm, but a miraculous one. ■

To learn more about ORR business and community members, please visit [www.overgroundrr.com](http://www.overgroundrr.com)

# MACEO'S KIDS: GROOMING TOMORROW'S CEOS



## The Conductor

In the news every evening there are stories of children who are lost to violence, be it at home or in the streets. At times it seems as though there is not much the community can do to save them as children's organizations are outnumbered by the gangs, guns and garbage that lures them in. Maceo Brown, founder of Mentoring Aspiring CEO's (MACEO's) Kids' Foundation is taking the necessary steps to level the playing field and guide these children on a path to life and career success.

Brown, a native of Southwest Atlanta, is very familiar with the harshness of the streets of Atlanta. In some ways, he's a two-part protector. His business, System 5 Electronics is a security company for residential and corporate buildings. "I knew early in life that I wanted to be my own boss and my father encouraged me to take up a trade," he recalls. "Watching my father and mother diligently work extra hours provided my brothers and me a firsthand experience and understanding of a world that each of us would one day embrace."

The encouragement he received as a child and young adult is what he wants to share with today's Atlanta youth. The organization was created to bring intelligent, compassionate and dedicated members of the business community together in pursuit of providing youth the opportunities and tools to grow as successful members of society. "Teaching economics to



Maceo Brown

our kids earlier is going to make a bigger impact going forward as far as the number of businesses we have lost in this generation as African-Americans. We need to stop and reverse that to where the businesses that are in our community are service businesses that are owned by us," the youngest of four proclaims. "Once we get back to doing that, we're going to solve our unemployment problems; we're going to solve a lot of our homeless problems if we finally recognize that the more we support one another, the better offer we're going to be."

Part of the purpose of the MACEO's Kids nonprofit organization is to show children the potential they hold and how they can use it to prosper. "I'm a strong believer that when you start thinking that you are the boss and your customers are not, you start losing business," he states. "I also believe in giving back to the community." When the youth of MACEO's Kids graduate from the program, they will have a stronger understanding of what it takes

to be an entrepreneur and handle personal finances.

"It is our belief that we must teach our kids to exceed the accomplishments of those who came before them, then we will create a cycle of economic wealth and social growth that detaches [us] from the negative stigmatism and destructive cycles that have historically plagued our communities."

Teaching a child very early – the expenses that you have to go through as a parent – makes a child more aware of why not to leave the lights on, not to let the water run as long as it's running because the more we teach a kid about why a parent balances their budget, the more they'll understand the reason why it's so important to save money."

***"...we must teach our kids to exceed the accomplishments of those who came before them"***

Brown learned a lot from the hard work and lessons from his parents, but as many successful businesspersons, there is often a mentor who offers guidance and other words of wisdom that help along the journey. For Brown that person was the late Nathaniel Bronner, the Atlanta-based beauty tycoon. The two met in 1985 and Brown claims that Bronner helped cement his road to success. Bronner reinforced the characteristics of hard work, focus, courage and "claiming it" for himself. Today, Brown is

taking it upon himself to play the same role for children who might not otherwise have access to successful businesspersons.

His dedication shows in his own System 5 Electronics business all the way to his 501 (c) 3, MACEO's Kids Foundation. His humble beginnings are a thing of the past, but he'll always remember them. "The company's name was derived from the five security services that I provided customers at the time," he recalls. "The company started with only six employees that eagerly occupied [my] home-based business. My living room was turned into a conference room, the den was used as the operations department's office, the guest bedroom was the executive office and the garage was the equipment and storage room, and the rest is history."

Making room in the history books for the accomplishments of a great businessperson is great; however, making an impact in the life of the next generation of business leaders is a greater honor. Maceo Brown has recognized that and is taking action to preparing that generation to make an even larger impact. ■

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# CLARK ATLANTA CHANGES HAITI

By Sharon Adams

The dust has settled and news cameras are long gone, however, what remains in Haiti after the January 12 earthquake is nearly 1,600 square miles of pure destruction and thousands of people trying to put their lives back together. The 7.0 earthquake that ravaged Haiti's Port-au-Prince capital was the worst in the country's history, thus igniting an outpour of relief efforts as the world watched this country roughly the size of Delaware struggle to regain its bearings. Although millions of dollars have already been donated, aid will be needed for months, possibly years, before the country will be self sufficient. One campaign continuing to give, six months later, is CHANGE Haiti, formed by students in the Clark Atlanta University Graduate School of Business.

Challenged by their entrepreneur course professor Dr. Edward Irons, to take charge and make a difference the students sprung into action. "I thought this would be a good experience for our students to get involved in and learn that when you succeed in life you have to give back," Irons said. "This was a great opportunity for them even though they didn't have much."

Emike Omogbai, CHANGE Haiti's marketing co-chair said Irons put it in simple terms. "He said there's a little boy in England riding a bike to help the people in Haiti, so what are you guys going to do," Omogbai explained. "So we came up with the idea to raise loose change with a monetary goal of \$5,000." Initially the task at hand seemed daunting: collect pennies, quarters, nickels and dimes until a goal of \$5,000 was met.

Samantha Wallace, the campaign's chairperson, said it was more successful than she could have imagined. "It kind of morphed into much more than just collecting loose change; we sold T-shirts, had a concert and even got national press coverage," said Wallace who graduated in May. And morph it did. In a mere two months, March 1 to April 30, they raised \$4,500 falling just a few hundred dollars short of their goal.

They began by collecting change in highly trafficked areas on campus: The student center, Carl and Mary Ware building and the Robert W. Woodruff Library, then turned it up a notch. Omogbai said although she wasn't initially as enthusiastic as some of her classmates, she did put to work her resources. "I was talking to the vice president of SunTrust, who happens to be Haitian and through her, Samantha was able to sell our T-shirts at their Food is Love Haiti fund-raising event," she said.

The campaign's logo, designed by fellow student Stephen Stewart, was brandished on the T-shirts that sold for \$15-\$20 and had as much significance as the campaign itself. "The shirts were actually made in Haiti, so it brings the donations full circle back to Haiti," Wallace said. Former Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin, V-103 radio personality, Ryan Cameron and jazz singer Kathleen Bertrand were just a few influential community leaders who purchased shirts helping bring sales of more than \$400 at the SunTrust event.

The campaign culminated with a CHANGE Haiti Day festival on the CAU promenade where V-103 radio personality and DJ Greg Street hosted a live remote. The day-long event set them \$1,700 closer to their goal. Though raising funds was critical to the project, to the



Clark Atlanta University students walk through the Promenade on campus during CHANGE Haiti Day. The CHANGE Haiti campaign raised enough money for scholarships for 80 Haitian children to attend school in their native country.

students involved, where the money actually goes is equally as important.

Wallace said she felt that as students their goal should be to partner with a Haitian organization focused on education. Through her research she found the Haitian Education Foundation and her classmates agreed that was a perfect fit for their efforts. "We know the country is lagging behind in education," Wallace said. "[Although] there are a lot of private schools, people can't afford to send their kids to them and I think education is the catalyst for making a florescent nation." The money raised will provide 80 students with scholarships for one academic year.

Irons said he is extremely proud of his students for not only accepting the call of a social responsibility but also for far exceeding his expectations. "They got so involved and it just

took off. All I did was just listen to them," said the 88-year-old professor. "This was a prime example of the students taking everything they learned in entrepreneur class and other disciplines and putting it to use. Their hearts were in it [and] that was so obvious," he added.

Irons, who retired this year, said although it was completely unplanned and stemmed from a horrific event, he feels like this campaign will allow him to do so on a high note. "As a teacher or professor there's no higher reward than to see your students get up and do the things that you taught them," Irons exclaimed. He and CHANGE Haiti will leave a legacy that is rooted in the school's mottoes of "Culture for Service" and "I'll Find a Way or Make One." ■

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# SOMMERVILLE TAKES STAGE WITH STUDENTS

The Conductor

Reaching back is Joey Sommerville's way of pushing others up. Just a while ago, he met and did an impromptu performance with the Jean Childs Young Middle School jazz band. That led the trumpeter and the students to schedule a performance that would bridge two generations of jazz musicians into one awesome jam session.

However, this wasn't the first session the middle school students performed with Sommerville. Last year, the trumpeter was a featured artist at a event hosted by prominent Atlanta businessman, Thomas Dortch where the students also performed. While they were on stage Sommerville took notice of the professional sound and wanted in on the fun. He asked Robert Jeffrey, the band's director, if he could have a chance to play with them and was met with a warm and excitable "sure!"

Not long after, the student band and Sommerville were making beautiful music together and both parties will forever remember what the feeling was in the room behind the band stand. "It was actually a thrill to have Joey perform with us," Jeffrey stated. "He did little tricks playing with the melody and octaves higher than what the trumpets normally play in. He just embellished the piece and the children got a real kick out of it. Of course, we were really happy about him coming back and playing."

Sommerville believes that music is a way for students to grow individually and collectively



Joey Sommerville, award-winning trumpeter, performs with Jean Childs Young M.S. students.

as members of one unit. This experience is often an opportunity for children to learn teamwork and appreciate the talents of others. The lifelong musician is a staunch supporter of keeping music in schools. His support is due to his belief that music encompasses everything that a child needs to make an intelligent, knowledgeable adult.

According to the band director, their confidence grows with every note and performance. Jeffrey says that the performance and experience the students had with Sommerville also boosted their confidence. "He instilled the whole confidence piece in them," he recalls. "When playing jazz it takes a great deal of confidence, especially during the improvisation portion. So to see him improvise for several courses for a couple of the songs really contributed to their confidence level and inspired

them to improvise on different selections."

The benefit was mutual for the famed musician as well. "You get some of their enthusiasm and energy. It reminds you of why you started doing music as a child and how much fun it is. It's really inspiring to see the passion that some of these kids have for music already." Sommerville hopes that he gets the opportunity to perform with the students again one day soon. "I had a great time. They're a great band," he boasts. "Those kids can play. We're going to figure out a way to do some more [performances] next year."

Sommerville started his school's band in the fifth grade and learned how to play the trumpet. The experience of working with the students brought back fond memories. He also commended Jeffrey and stated that the stu-

dents were very fortunate to have him as band director. "Sometimes it's the luck of the draw [regarding] who you get as a teacher," Sommerville states. "And that influences what you are aware of and what options you are aware of. Teachers open up avenues for students, they open up possibilities and when you have someone like Robert, as a band director, that opens up a world of possibilities."

Jeffrey states that the students will never forget the opportunity to play and improvise with a professional musician who appreciates their talents as well. He also states that there were lessons taken away from the experience that the students will carry with them wherever life takes them; be it musical or elsewhere. "They were also excited about being able to play a broader range on their instruments. They expressed about having to play a higher range after playing with Mr. Sommerville."

In the near future the world will get a glimpse of the talent that comes from Jean Childs Young Middle School. Not only from the music department but from the academia as well. ■



Robert Jeffrey

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# CITIZENS TRUST BANK - A STABILIZING FORCE IN THE COMMUNITY

A Bank is one of the most important, if not the most important, institution in any community. Between 1888 and 1934, there were more than 130 U.S. banks owned by African-Americans, which is believed to have been the force behind the explosion of African-American businesses, which grew from 4,000 in 1867 to approximately 50,000 by 1917. Blacks found it necessary to establish their own businesses that they could patronize. While the 1960s produced a growing number of African-American banks, by the 1980s, many of them had failed. Today, according to a March 2010 Federal Reserve Board report, only 30 U.S. banks are owned by African-Americans.

A bank is a stabilizing force in the community it serves. It loans money to small businesses to help them expand and create jobs. It assists religious and community organizations to help them better address the particular needs of the community. It helps individuals to become home owners and help existing home owners make repairs and additions to their property. The bank does this because it gets the money it uses to make a profit for themselves from the community where it is located. Community support of the bank strengthens its ability to further support and expand the communities it serves. People finance the banks. Banks in turn should prudently finance the people's needs. This is how it works in every community except the African American community. Black people have over a trillion dollars in spending power however most Black Banks struggle to get Black people to deposit their money despite a long history of Black Banks helping the needs of the African American community. Accordingly, most Black-owned banks lack the resources necessary to serve its community as the communities and the opportunities there in grow in time.

Majority Banks decline over 95% of the loan requests from small businesses that want to reinvest in their communities. When there is lending activity within our communities, it is too often in the form of higher interest rates or outrageous fees. Majority Banks have a history of predatory lending practices in many instances which have caused many foreclosed homes and an overwhelming amount of debt for many hard working African American citizens. Unfortunately, African Americans continue to place the majority of their money in the Major Banks and other institutions that too often don't service the financial needs or our have a vested interest in the communities it



supposedly serves.

In order to create Black wealth we must recycle Black dollars. We must support Black businesses and create more African American owned businesses. The Black Owned Bank is vital to achieving this goal. Every Black (African American) person or business that has a checking or savings account should transfer at least part of their money to a Black owned bank. This is the most effective way to support Black businesses directly and indirectly play a vital role in the economic development

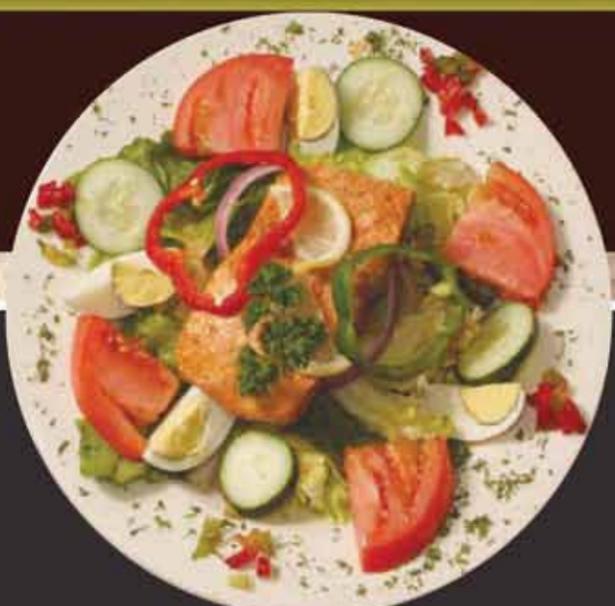
The role for black-owned Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) like Citizens Trust Bank of Atlanta (CTB) is the same as it has always been -- to support the financial needs of the communities in which it is located, leverage deposits and support the formation and development of emerging enterprises that will produce jobs and improve the economic development within our communities. CTB has been in existence for 90 years and is proud of the financial and educational support it has provided its community. "It is rewarding to visit the communities where we have financed homes and entire subdivisions,

grocery stores, retail centers, medical and other office facilities, schools, nursing facilities, hotels, childcare centers, restaurants and many other projects which proved to have significant impact on economic revitalization and the create of jobs and wealth within those communities," stated James E. Young, President and CEO of Citizens Trust Bank. "There is much at stake in this challenging economic environment where revenue and profits are down and home ownership and wealth are lower than it's been in years." Mr. Young declared. Black banks need the investment of its community in order to thrive and some cases to survive. Citizens Trust Bank has been strong enough to survive when many other banks have failed. According to CTB Senior Lender, Farrand Logan, "Our Bank is well capitalized, profitable and is actively making loans even in this tough environment. Whether it is a new SBA or conventional loan to purchase the facility in which you are currently leasing, expand into a new location, refinance existing commercial debt, consolidate several existing loans, purchase a vehicle or equipment, secure a working capital line of credit, obtain a home equity line of credit, or simply move your operating account and cash management services to a cus-

tommer friendly bank, we encourage people to bank with Citizens Trust Bank."

Continuing on the 90 year tradition of supporting the well-being of the community, Citizens Trust Bank relies on strong support from community to ensure that the Bank remains strong for future generations.

90 years ago, Citizens Trust Bank resolved to offer its customers the best banking products with first-class customer service. Living up to that promise, Citizens Trust Bank remains a beacon of strength for businesses and the communities it serves. As a leader in the financial services industry and the 4th largest minority-owned financial institution in the nation, Citizens Trust Bank offers a full range of quality business and consumer products and services including Small Business Association (SBA) financed loans, residential mortgage lending, and consumer and business online banking products. It currently has financial centers throughout metropolitan Atlanta and Columbus, Georgia and in Birmingham and Eutaw Alabama. ■





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JUSTICE – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

Along with Syracuse, students at Atlanta's Bauder College are also getting involved with the Moore's Ford Lynching investigation and attended the July reenactment in Monroe. National and local civil and human rights activists, clergy and political leaders were also in attendance. Those who spoke included Elizabeth Omilami, daughter of Civil Rights activist Hosea Williams and co-director of Hosea Williams Feed the Hungry. She encouraged the audience to "stay on the battlefield for the Lord."

Alabama State Senator Charles Steele, SCLC President Emeritus who wants to help get a national museum for lynching victims built in Monroe said, "I love President Barack Obama and I think he's doing a great job. But he won't get nothing done unless we march and demonstrate. We still got to do it!" Reverend Dr. Gerald Durley, senior pastor of Providence Baptist Church, former president of the Concerned Black Clergy and retired director-counsel and president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, told the audience they'd been lulled into complacency. However he riled up the crowd when he spoke about taking action that is lead by God. He concluded by getting the audience to join him in singing "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round."

The rally included the first scene of the reenactment where Roger Malcom (a black farmer) attacked Barney Hester (a white farmer) for Hester's alleged sexual advances toward Malcom's wife, Dorothy Dorsey Malcom. The scene was unusual for that era being that black men risked their lives if they retaliated against a white person. That scene is usually done at Hester's farm, but to keep the audience from enduring the extreme heat, it was done in the church.

Throughout the rally soul-stirring gospel mu-

sic was sung. Songs like "I Believe I'll Run On", "Since I Laid My Burdens Down", and "Amazing Grace" received overwhelming applause and "Amens" from the audience. After the rally, the audience returned to their vehicles to join a motorcade to the County Courthouse and the Old County Jail in downtown Monroe to see where Roger Malcom was held for 11 days. But the most dramatic scene was seeing Malcom being released from jail to his rejoicing wife and relatives, George and May Murray Dorsey, only to see them all driven by white farmer, Loy Harrison to the Moore's Ford Bridge to be killed. The killing reenactment was powerful and disturbing. It ended with a young girl singing "Take My Hand Precious Lord" and a prayer from one of the ministers in attendance.

Finally a benediction was performed at the historic memorial marker dedicated to the legacy of Roger and Dorothy Malcom, their unborn infant, and George and Mae Murray Dorsey. The audience was then challenged to continue their pursuit of justice. The reenactment had a multi-racial cast of actors, including Bert Skelie of Decatur, who has participated for the past five years. He found out about it through the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition. The last three years he played a Klansman, but this year he played Loy Harrison, the white farmer who drove the two couples out to Moore's Ford Bridge to be murdered. "I don't enjoy playing those roles, but the reason I continue to participate is that [the reenactment] helps bring publicity to the case and helps the FBI and GBI continue to search for the suspects of these murders [who are still alive]."

Members of the Concerned Black Clergy were also in attendance. Rev. Dr. Richard Cobble, president of the Concerned Black Clergy said,

"Racism can't be swept under the rug. As long as we don't talk about it, we'll still have lynchings of another sort – like blacks not getting jobs because of their credit scores ... Preachers need to go beyond saving souls and address issues in our community. I think we need to have a television show where leaders can have honest discussions [about those issues] and our kids can learn from that."

"This gives us a chance to pause and reflect on what we need to do. We need to unite all people of goodwill...for a commitment to righteousness, justice, fairness, and equality of opportunity," said Reverend Albert Love, V.P. of Missions for the Concerned Black Clergy. Reverend Eric Terrell added, "A man who doesn't know his history is doomed to repeat it."

Bobby Lyle, former president of the Social Circle chapter of the SCLC, has been narrating the reenactment since it started six years ago. He's seen photos of the dead Malcoms and Dorseys and said it still affects him to this day. "People need to know our history and what we went through back then. And the code of silence – it's not too late to break that code," said Lyle. He added that though he still gets hateful phone calls from some local whites who are against the reenactments, he appreciates the calls from other whites who want to apologize for what happened. He concluded, "If we can bring [the killers] to justice, then those who died can rest in peace. And then black and white families can come together, and we can even come together more as a nation."

Members of the Malcom and Dorsey families, who also come from other states, attend the reenactment every year and close out the weekend with a family reunion at Matthews Park, which Rep. Brooks attends. "We named the

seven-month old unborn baby [that was cut out of Dorothy Malcom's stomach] Justice, and the family has embraced that," said Brooks. He added that they'll continue doing the reenactments until the families get closure from the killers being brought to justice. Rep. Brooks is already making plans for 2011. "We're working to get Reverend C.T. Vivian for our annual march on Moore's Ford Bridge in April 2011, and working to secure Minister Louis Farrakhan for the July 25 reenactment," he said.

There is still a \$35,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest and prosecution of the murderers. The GBI is receiving calls at 404-244-2600; the FBI, 404-679-9000; and Rep. Brooks, 404-656-6372 or 404-372-1894. For more information visit the following sites: www.ga-gabeo.com and www.coldcaselaw.syr.edu.

"This is a stain on our history and a burden on our soul. By closing out this case we can remove the stain and lift the burden, but we must continue to work... we want closure and healing, but we can't get there until there is prosecution of the killers who still live," Brooks lamented. "Just because President Obama is in office doesn't mean the struggle is over. The struggle is forever. And it's never too late for justice." ■



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# HABESHA: RECALLING OUR PAST, BUILDING THEIR FUTURE

By Sharon Ochoa

“I want better for you than what I had; to go further in life and reach higher heights.” This is often the wish, prayer and hope parents have for their children. For community leaders who have accepted the charge of guiding today’s youth, a group that much of society has all but given up on, toward those heights, a similar feeling resonates in all of their efforts. But a question that repeatedly arises is how to reach them? How to reach a generation that adults are likely far removed from? Cashawn Myers, founder and director of HABESHA Inc., has an answer that has worked for many of the young boys who dedicate time to his urban garden and whom he has taken on journeys to West Africa: Get a mirror.

“I saw a lot of myself in those young brothers and I know what it took for me was for somebody to just take an interest and let me know that I could do more,” he confided. “The more you talk to the youth you really realize that they have a lot of knowledge and power that’s not being tapped into.” Through HABESHA, Helping Africa By Establishing Schools at Home and Abroad, Myers transformed his desire to enlighten the next generation of African-American youths about who they are and where they come from into an international organization with activities throughout the United States and Africa.

“We see HABESHA as a way to repair some of the damages that people of African descent in



America have experienced over the years through slavery, Jim Crowe, etcetera,” Myers declared. Though not a novel idea, momentum for the program has grown rapidly with branches in New York; Washington, DC; and the Virgin Islands forming in the past year alone.

In order to get children involved HABESHA has a multi-prong approach which includes programs such as Sustainable Seeds, Lion Heart and Black To Our Roots.

Black To Our Roots takes youth of African descent through a study about themselves as it relates to the African culture. The leadership opportunities, training and learning culminate in a journey to Ghana, West Africa. Since the

**“We see HABESHA as a way to repair some of the damages that people of African descent in America have experienced over the years through slavery.”**

*-Cashawn Myers,  
HABESHA founder and director*

program’s 2004 inception, nearly 100 young people have experienced the trip. Myers said for many students, learning how a lot of their modern day inter- actions have derived from the African culture, from handshakes to dances and other traditions, is eye-opening. “Then the voyage itself is life changing,” he said. “When they see [how] Ghana youth, who don’t have much access to media, are more aware of what’s going on in the world than the youth here in America it inspires them to take more seriously their education and the things that they have,” Myers said.

HABESHA has also taken the responsibility of enriching the lives of children in Africa by establishing the Trinity Orphanage in 2004.

Located in the Tutu-Akwuapim region of Ghana where the HABESHA students also visit and learn the importance of service and giving back.

Though its focus is largely on the youth, HABESHA also reaches out to the local community at large. Nestled in the heart of the city, where commuters hustle and bustle through Atlanta traffic and the homeless population is concentrated, there lies a large clearing of land where HABESHA has laid the foundation representing the adage of teaching a man to fish. This is the location of the HABESHA garden for the Sustainable Seeds program. Here, youth and other community members learn and participate in taking fruits and vegetables from seeds to the dinner plate. “With so many diseases being linked to food, now is a vital time to teach the youth and the community about organic food growing and the overall self-sustainability of growing your own foods,” Myers said. HABESHA donates some of the food grown to nearby homeless shelters and also invites the community for a weekly “garden party” every Sunday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Myers said HABESHA’s goal for the next few years is not too far from its initial concept. “We want to make HABESHA a world-renowned organization that’s about community service and uplifting of youth, specifically those of African descent, and overall make a positive impact on the world,” he said. To help achieve this goal Myers and his team are forming a template for other branches to follow. ■

## REV. DR. WARNOCK LEADS CAMPAIGN TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS

The Conductor

The Concerned Black Clergy [CBC] of Metropolitan Atlanta is dedicated to the service of helping the greater Atlanta community in the realms of homelessness and helplessness. Within this description falls the health of the community.

On Thursday, July 22, more than a dozen pastors came together to speak and agree on the idea of bringing HIV/AIDS awareness to the African-American community of Atlanta. Much of the African-American population in the city is affected by the virus. Rev. Dr. Richard Cobble, president of the CBC, felt the topic was one that should be shared with other CBC members as he knows that the audiences they capture are numerous.

Rev. Cobble explained the luncheon that was planned for pastors of churches. His vision was to reach a broad range of people who will take a message of health and wellness to large masses of parishioners. “I wanted this to be for the ministers because I know you can reach 50, 100, 1,000 people in your congregations,” Cobble stated. Presented by Rev. Dr. Raphael G. Warnock of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Proposition 1964 was introduced as the

Warnock stated that to encourage his congregants to get tested for the virus, he voluntarily got tested in his pulpit during a Sunday service.

Support from the ministers was widespread and they were willing to do their part in spreading the message of taking care of the body as well as the spirit. Pastor Leland Jones, Sr. of Greater New Light Missionary Baptist Church was in attendance and left ready to work and encourage his parishioners and community members to get tested.



“One thing that I’m walking away with, with Dr. Warnock in charge and knowing that members of the CBC, that now maybe clergy persons from an African-American base might see that this issue of HIV/AIDS is serious enough that we’ve got to put it back on the front burner,” Jones stated. “When Dr. Warnock was dealing with some of the statistics, and basically what we’re

talking about here is heterosexual black females, in many cases that are in monogamous relationships, meaning it’s not them that are going out and getting the AIDS, it’s being brought to them by a partner that they should love and trust, or love and should be able to trust. But [the trust] is being violated.”

Hosea Feed the Hungry and Homeless (HFTH) Executive Director, Elizabeth Omilami stated how the work that is done at her organization is one that is a ministry and not just another station that hands out food, clothes and money. As a minister Omilami understands that a large part of her job is to teach those that she helps how to survive, not just on handouts but learn how to make it on their own. Part of her mission of preventing homelessness is also providing medical care and screenings. Testing for HIV/AIDS for those who have received help from HFTH is playing a significant role in the building and knowingness of a growing group of people who are relying more and more on public and free assistance.

Hosea Feed the Hungry and Homeless was started in 1971 by Omilami’s parents, Civil Rights pioneer Hosea Williams and his wife, Juanita Williams. The organization assists the city’s homeless population with housing, food and other types of support.

Hosted by the Cascade Club at 2890 Colonial Colony Parkway, owner, Jeff Riddle was honored

to offer his facility to the organization for such a helpful cause. Cobble congratulated Riddle on his acquisition of the venue in 2008 and commended him for bringing business back to the community with the Cascade Club.

The relationships and support Rev. Dr. Warnock garnered from his peers at the luncheon gave him notice that the mission that he is on to increase and improve the quality of life of African Americans in Atlanta is one well received. Jones in particular is ready to move forward with branching out into the communities and providing HIV/AIDS awareness to those who might be infected and those who are possibly at risk.

“[At Greater New Light] we’ve opened it up to the community, and it wasn’t just a matter of ‘we’re having an AIDS testing for a particular day’ we made sure the churches were supportive of it,” he recalls. “But at the same time we did some camping at [a local mall] ... and it was amazing. I think with the black church in particular our theology and our rhetoric should not move us in a way that we become stagnant while people are hurting. Let’s face it, HIV is not going anywhere. If it develops into AIDS what are we going to do go and bless them and try to get them into heaven when we should have blessed them while they were still alive and at least had some semblance of health.” ■

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## CHRISTIAN DECLARATION OF POSITION REGARDING MARRIAGE

1. As a Christian, with all of my faults and shortcomings, I must look to the Bible to define what marriage is and what marriage is not.
2. Marriage according to the Bible is between a man and a woman. (Genesis 2:24 - "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.")
3. The relationship was established by God between the first man Adam and the first woman Eve, both created by God. (Genesis 2:20 - 25).
4. Though the Bible is my guide, support for homosexual marriages cannot be found even in non-biblical sources. Every system of faith (whether it was called a religion or not) which has had any wide recognition in human history has recognized that marriage is only between men and women, never between persons of the same sex. "The first country to allow same-sex couples to enter into legally recognized marriage was the Netherlands, effective in 2001." Wikipedia, Same-sex marriage.
5. Even when marriage has been defined to include polygamy, it was always between men and women, never between several men or several women. As shown in Wikipedia, Same-sex marriage, homosexual "marriages" is a recent invention beginning in the Netherlands in 2001.
6. Indeed the Bible is very plain, in both the old and new testament, that homosexual behavior cannot be approved.  
 "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22).  
 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things; Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.  
 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. (Romans 1:22 - 26).
7. None of this is to say that homosexual behavior is the only sexual behavior unacceptable by the Bible. Sexual intercourse outside of marriage between a man and a woman is also prohibited. (Exodus 20:14 - "Thou shalt not commit adultery."; Romans 13:9 - "...Thou shalt not commit adultery...").
8. At any large gathering of Christians there is likely to be many who have committed, are committing, and/or within a short period of time after that gathering will commit, adultery. Indeed David, God's chosen servant, committed adultery. (2 Samuel 11th and 12th chapters).
9. However, there is no movement afoot to stop the Church from preaching the Biblical teachings against adultery. A very large percentage of people who have committed adultery claim to be driven by biological urges which they cannot resist. This is similar to the claims of those who advocate homosexual marriages.
10. We have all fallen and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.") This includes heterosexuals as well as homosexuals. But it is not God or the Bible that must change. We must change.
11. The fundamental message of the Christian faith as stated by Jesus is "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (John 3:7). And, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16).
12. As much as I love my homosexual relatives and friends, I cannot go against God and the Bible to endorse homosexual marriage. I respect their choice to not follow the Bible in their personal lives, just as I respect the right of persons to commit adultery.
13. But my respect for a person's right to make a private choice does not justify my endorsement of that which the Bible clearly states is wrong. It would be a violation of my conscience and my relationship with God, as well as an encouragement for others to do wrong, for which I would be responsible to my family, society in general and GOD.
14. Likewise I stand strongly opposed to any violence against those involved in homosexual behavior. Any act of violence against a person because of homosexual behavior is a sin in and of itself, as well as a crime which should and must be prosecuted.
15. It must be clearly understood that the Church must preach the gospel which includes the loving teaching to repent for all sin including homosexual behavior. (Matthew 28: 19-20 - "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen).

It is imperative that a clear statement of the position of Christians regarding this issue be put forth.

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Corinthians 14:8).

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:12).

This is not homophobia, which those who seek to silence dialogue quickly label anyone who disagrees with them. This is homolove.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16).

THIS DECLARATION IS BY THE BIBLE BELIEVING CHRISTIANS ALLIANCE

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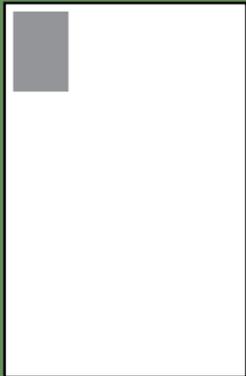


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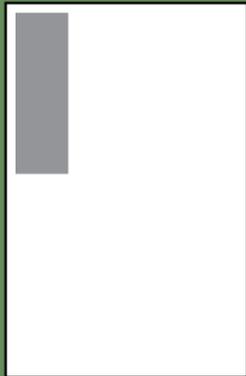
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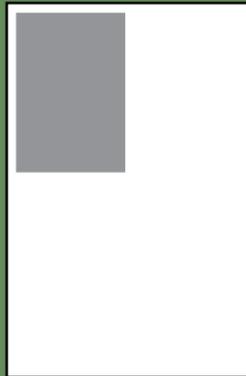
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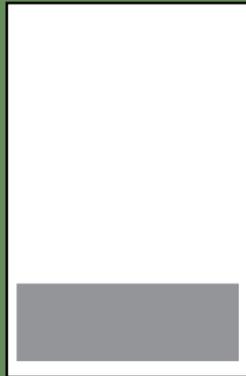
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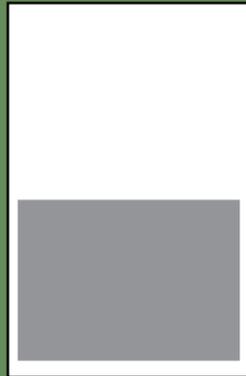
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