

Virginia Brooks Brewster Offers Suggestions For Combatting Problems of Community's Homeless, Hungry

In a recent letter to Councilman Steve Miller, Virginia Brooks Brewster, former long-time member of the Clark County School District Board of Trustees, and former City Council candidate, commended him for his actions taken on behalf of the people of the community in general and for his support of the efforts of John 3:16 Cook on behalf of the community's hungry and homeless.

"Let me commend you for certain actions that you have taken since you were elected Councilman. You appear to really care about the people in this community and your energies exerted so far prove your sincerity," she wrote.

She lauded the efforts of John 3:16 Cook and his outreach program, citing that he is "trying to fill a void for the homeless and hungry that is not being filled by other agencies in this community. That's not wrong . . . that's right. Mr. Cook is not dope . . . he's HOPE," she said.

"What many of us don't understand is why the City officials and other elected officials don't acknowledge that we do have a homeless, hungry problem, and combine forces to try and solve it. The problem can be solved," she said. She called for Las Vegas to serve as a role model or innovator by initiating an outstanding program to take care of its homeless, hungry people.

Brewster offered the following suggestions to Miller to be shared with the committee be appointed to look at the homeless, hungry problem in Las Vegas:

1. The City of Las Vegas (taxpayers) own certain land. Why not donate a parcel of our land to construct a 3-story facility.

2. An average 3-bedroom home in Las Vegas costs approximately \$70,000. This includes 2 baths, living room, hall, garage, fireplace, etc. We would not need an elaborate facility, just a simple place that would cost approximately 10 average 3-bedroom homes. We would not need the space of 10 homes. \$700,000 would easily accommodate a building similar to the Comfort Inn that is located on the corner of Bonanza and Las Vegas Boulevard North. Our current homeless, hungry population needs the space of about 10 3 bedroom homes.

3. What if each large hotel donated \$20,000 and each small hotel and motel donated \$10,000 toward a common fund (homeless, hungry fund). For future reference this fund will be called HHF. This money would be deposited into a financial institution with the highest paid interest.

4. What if each builder/developer donated half of the building materials and the other half bought from the HHF.

5. What if each subcontractor in this community such as sand and gravel, plumbing, earth-movers, etc., were to donate half of the needed supplies and the other half bought from the HHF.

6. What if the Unions such as teamsters, Plumbers, and others, were to ask their members to donate a weekend to this project and build a facility.

7. What if the fast-food businesses were to feed the workers during construction of the facility.

8. What if the utility companies were to connect the utilities at no charge to the facility.

9. What if the linen com-

panies donated enough linen.

10. What if the department stores donated china and silverware.

11. What if the carpet businesses donated carpet.

12. What if our automobile firms donated 4 cars to transport the homeless, hungry to a new job location, etc.

13. What if each family in Clark County donated just \$1 to the HHF.

14. What if the homeless, hungry facility were contacted daily with job openings throughout Clark County.

15. What if after the homeless, hungry found jobs, they voluntarily donated either 10% of one month's salary or that amount of time back to the facility.

"There are other areas and things that I have not thought about that could be included in this plan of success," Brewster said. "This is such a simple plan until many people would assist. It does not call for paying astronomical fees to consultants, etc. Each person in the community would feel a part of the facility. Also, the community would know that this has not been done in any other community. What HUMANITY!"

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have had a bad spending policy. We spend more than we save and we have had a history of spending with the very forces that are sometimes inextricably linked with our oppression. We all should recommit ourselves to spending and saving our financial resources, not just for the personal acquisition of material wealth. But more importantly, we should commit ourselves to a spending and economic development strategy that allows the broadest possible participation by our community at large.

Another pressing need is to challenge current attempts to psychologically re-enslave African Americans. We spend too much of our time and money trying to change our God-given gifts of beauty and wholeness. The negative stereotypes and racist images that the established news media often portray need to be confronted forthrightly. In 1988, in other words, we need to be more proactive

than reaction. In fact, what we need is a long-range goal that the majority of our people can agree upon. This goal should not change from year to year, but should be worked toward by each generation.

Lastly, there is no single greater issue than the struggle against racist apartheid in southern Africa. It is my hope and prayer that African Americans, in particular, and all others who love freedom will more concretely assist the African National Congress and SWAPO. The liberation movements aimed at South Africa and Namibia deserve our immediate and long-term support. In 1988 freedom will not be free.

If you desire to return to school for that high school diploma that you never received, here's the opportunity of a lifetime! The Clark County School District offers free classes for persons 17 years of age or older. Just call the Adult Education Office at 799-8509. Do it today!

Motor Voter Program Begins January 11

Nevada voters can begin registering to vote at their local office of the Department of Motor Vehicles starting Monday, January 11.

Secretary of State Frankie Sue Del Papa, in announcing the opening of the program popularly known as Motor Voter, expressed the hope that voter registration and turnout will increase as a result.

"One of the things which candidates walking door to door have found is that some of our citizens wanted to be

able to register to vote somewhere other than at the county courthouse. Nearly everyone sooner or later has business at the DMV. They can register to vote at the same time they renew a driver license or a vehicle registration, so a special trip to the courthouse will not be required. And in some areas, the local DMV office is more conveniently located and has more parking than the courthouse."

Del Papa said credit for putting the program together

goes not just to state officials and DMV workers, but also to local county clerks and voter registrars. "They worked closely with us to develop a voter registration application which was compatible for all counties, and they were a source of a lot of good ideas on how to simplify and speed up the registration process."

The program was introduced in the legislature by Nevada Assemblyman Robert Sader.

BOOK REVIEW

Brave, Black and Proud

(A classic novel to be read and reread)

A review of *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* by Ernest J. Gaines (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1987)—Hardcover—\$16.95.

By now almost everyone has seen the highly-acclaimed TV movie of "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman." Perhaps many of our readers have already read this classic novel which was first published in 1971. Whether you are in the first group, or the second, or both, you will want to read this new edition of the story. In the introduction, Ernest Gaines, who has been called "one of the finest American writers today," tells of his meeting with Miss Jane and how he got her to tell her story.

Although this is a fictional autobiography, there were perhaps a few other Miss Jane Pittmans in the history of Black Americans. A few who were born in slavery and who lived to see the dawning of the Second Emancipation. If there were, they, like Miss Jane, were the survivors.

The story is written in the best tradition of oral history. "My grandmother, who was a slave in Kentucky," says Jesse Jackson, "told me of things that happened to her as they happened to Miss Pittman. The truth rings throughout this book. Ernest Gaines is just about the greatest."

Book I takes us through the "War Year" where Jane meets soldiers — Confederate and Union; experiences the first glimmers of freedom; heads North; witnesses the murder of her companions; heads back to the South; meets all kinds of people — old, young, hunter and hunted, rednecks and Scalawags.

Book II, called "Reconstruction," lets us see a "Flicker of Light" with the hope of education and political power and "Again Darkness" when the troops left and Jane and the others were plunged into a "second slavery" and left to "root hog or die."

Book III, "The Plantation" and Book IV, "The Quarters" complete the story. With the parting words we accompany Miss Jane and on her trip to Bayonne to confront segregation in her own way.

This is a moving story of a proud, dignified, loving Black woman. You will laugh with her, cry with her and help her carry the burden that belongs to all of us. As one prominent writer says, ". . . Miss Jane's history is the capsule history of her race in America . . ."

Ernest Gaines was born in Louisiana. As a young child, he worked in the cotton fields of River Lake Plantation for fifty cents a day. Many of the old people could not read or write and from an early age, Gaines read and wrote letters for them.

Later, the family moved to California. Gaines graduated from San Francisco State College and in 1958, he won the coveted creative writing scholarship to Stanford University. Here he learned how to put his earlier experiences into the novel and short story form.

Our readers will also enjoy these other books by Ernest Gaines: *Catherine Carmier*, *Of Love and Dust*, *Bloodline*, *A Long Day in November*, *In My Father's House* and *A Gathering of Old Men*.

FROM JUNGLE CAT TO HOUSE CAT

Las Vegas cat owners have a great opportunity to see the origin of their pet cat. The Southern Nevada Zoological Park recently opened a new exhibit featuring Jungle Cats (*Felis chaus*).

The cat was well known to the ancient Egyptians as they were depicted on wall paintings from that time. Today the cat ranges from Egypt through the Middle East, Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent. Living mainly in jungles and swamps, diets consist of rodents, birds, frogs and fish. The Jungle cat is a very elusive hunter and its skills are highly developed.

Each afternoon during the month of January, park zoologists will give a lecture on small cats and conduct a question and answer period for the public.

Call the zoo at 648-5955 for details and come visit the new residents at the Southern Nevada Zoological Park. Winter zoo tours are 9 a.m. to dusk Monday through Sunday. Admission prices are \$3.50 for adults, \$2.50 for children (2-12 years) and seniors (ages 60 and over).

XAVIER U TO BUILD MODEL PROGRAM

NEW ORLEANS—The Xavier University Office of Student Services has received a \$45,800 grant to establish a student community service organization that will be a model for historically black institutions throughout the U.S.

The grant, awarded by ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency, will enable Xavier to create a campus service organization and set up a coalition among New Orleans schools that will pool resources and provide student volunteers for a range of community projects.