

NORTHERN NEVADA UPDATE

By Verita Black

Black Women: Achievements Against the Odds," is an exhibit showcased at the Washoe County Library in downtown Reno. The exhibit, organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, is being sponsored by the Northern Nevada Black Cultural Awareness Society.

The exhibit is extraordinary. Its powerful messages inspire the viewer to go forward. To see women who were born in Africa and sold as Slaves or women who were born into slavery go forward, succeed when absolutely everything was against them and become

great poets, writers, spokeswomen and religious leaders is incredible.

Messages such as "Aren't I a Woman?" from Sojourner Truth, "There was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other," from Harriet Tubman and "For my people standing alone try to fashion a better way from confusion, from hypocrisy and misunderstanding, trying to fashion a better world..." from Margaret Walker, rang out and left the onlooker in awe.

If you ever have the opportunity, see "Black Women: Achievement Against the Odds."

Northern Nevadans are

gearing up for the First Annual African-American Summit in Las Vegas on April 7, 1990. On April 7, all those who are planning to attend are meeting to discuss ideas they would like to bring to the summit and what they would like to come away from the summit with. Although participation from many different organizations and church groups is expected, the Northern Nevada Black Cultural Awareness Society, NNBCAS, is bringing the groups together.

NNBCAS (which is actually called Neb-Cus) was formed to promote and develop cultural awareness in the black community. The organization places particular emphasis on the area's youth by trying to provide alternative ideas and a positive direction for young people.

Some of the activities that the organization has been involved with include (1989-90):

A production of "A Night at the Cotton Club."

Hosted a reception in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King's daughter, Bernice King, who was a guest speaker at the Governor's Conference on Women.

Sponsored a Grant-writing Seminar.

Honored Alice Smith, a long-time Reno resident, for whom the Washoe County School Board has named a school. She is the first African-American to be so

ON THE CULTURAL OFFENSIVE

By Ramona Hoage Edelin, Ph.D
President, The National Urban Coalition

ENVISION NO COLOR LINE

As we stand at the threshold of the new millennium, W.E.B. Du Bois' words still clamor loudly in our ears: the problem of the 20th Century is the problem of the color line. All around the country, and around the world, the resolve of African people is that *we will not cross into the new age in the same condition as today.* In order to meet our resolve, we will have to prevail against

honored in Washoe County history. NNBCAS had a portrait of Ms. Smith painted and presented it to the School Board to be hung in the new school.

Sponsored a mixer designed to establish a network of Black professionals in our community, to identify role models for the youth in our community, and to create a directory.

Sponsored the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration where Roger Wilkins was the guest speaker.

The list goes on and on. NNBCAS is responsible for many of the positive changes that are occurring in our area.

Next week I'll give you an update on a Town Meeting where alleged police misconduct is the topic of discussion.

many challenges from outside our community; but we shall also have serious personal and group development agendas to fulfill. For both, we must start *envisioning no color line.* What would it be like?

Frederick Douglass, even as a newly emancipated slave, told us that we would be oppressed as long as we would endure oppression. It is important for us to understand that the historic split between African Americans and their White liberal benefactors can be traced back to the split between Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison. Garrison, though a courageous abolitionist, insisted that he must define the role Douglass would play in abolitionist meetings: Douglass insisted on throwing off the slave cloth and standing up as a free man to tell the story as he saw fit. In the power struggle that ensued, it became obvious that Garrison's paternalism could take him but so far in the true eradication of the color line. Douglass understood that "power concedes nothing without a demand--it never has and it never will," and he went off on his own to found the *North Star* newspaper and advance an agenda of full freedom for his people.

We ourselves forced an end to slavery and legal segregation, and the beginning of full voting and citizenship rights for our people and for everyone. As Du Bois observed, "It was the Negro himself who forced the consideration of (the incongruity of democracy and slavery), who made emancipation inevitable and made the modern world at least consider if not wholly accept the idea of a democracy including men of all races and colors. (*Gift of Black Folk*). Continuing and expanding this historic role as definers and enforcers of democracy, as we did so powerfully in the 1950s and 1960s, is a crucial component of the African American cultural offensive.

We know that we must, now in the decade of the 1990s, *unify our leadership in every community, nationally and internationally, around the agendas that will advance our whole group, affirming the reality that our freedom is indivisible.*

At the time of his release

GAPS

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agreed on everything, but we realized at some point that it's okay to agree to disagree. Just because it's not your way doesn't make it wrong.

The Silver Generation needs to understand that things are not as they were in the 60s. Prejudiceness is more subtle and not as blatant. They need to stop being so judgemental about the younger generations' actions. Young adults and teens have to bump their heads a few times and they must be allowed to make their mistakes. In the end it will make them stronger. They may seem stubborn and out of control, but years ago someone told the Silver Generation the very same things and they turned out quite well.

The Young Adults and Teens of today should never forget what paths were taken in order to make their living conditions as they are today. Many tears were shed and hundreds of lives taken. More importantly, they should stop thinking that they know everything and they should take heed of the knowledge that is being passed from the Silver Generation. The Silver Generation has been through the rough waters. Their only concern is that tomorrow's leaders not have to go through the fire as they did.

I mentioned knowledge, which brings us to education. As African-Americans we must learn to educate each other. We must know our history in full so that we'll have focus on our future. We should approach one another about any topic ranging from the newest trends to politics. We must open up- be verbal. As Salt N Pepa would say, "Express Yourself," be heard. But we must also listen and observe. That's the key to any gap-respecting each other's views and respecting each other.

Let's all go back to that old fashioned love.

And lastly, next time we decide to meet, let's do more than just talk. **LET'S PUT OUR WORDS INTO ACTION!**

from 27 years of political imprisonment, Nelson Mandela said this is not the time to retreat--this is the time to press for the completion of our agenda. The last decade of the 20th Century is the time for all of us to envision no color line, and by our unity, faith and work, to erase it once and for all.

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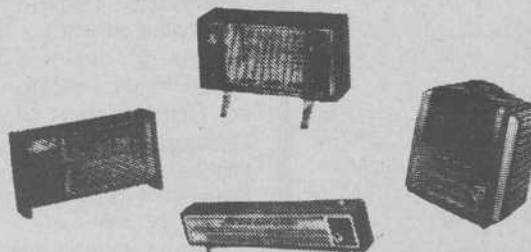
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