

NIKA'S GIFTS

NEW SHOP CATERS TO THOSE IN SEARCH OF AFROCENTRIC GIFTS



(left to right) Gwen and Juanita Walker, owners and operators of Nika's Gifts.
Photo By Savoy/LVS-Voice

By Bonita H. Armstrong

The most politically correct statement from the '60s was "I'm Black and I'm Proud." Well-groomed Afros, dashikis, and the Black Power sign told the tale of a people who were reclaiming pride in their heritage.

Today, that love of the African culture is again reborn. African Americans search high and low to find items that exemplify their love of themselves and their motherland, which sometimes can be a difficult task.

Enter Gwen and Juanita

Walker, owners and operators of Nika's Gifts, a West Las Vegas shop specializing in Afrocentric gifts, including African heritage prints, greeting cards, crafts, and more.

Gwen Walker says she became interested in Black memorabilia as a little girl, but began to pursue it seriously about five years ago. She would collect anything and everything that had to do with African Americans.

That is the theme behind Nika's Gwen said. "These items really tell the story of black people," she said.

The inspiration for Nika's came to Gwen after she searched for black greeting cards in Las Vegas. She did not find them but she did find a store that would order them for her.

"I said 'Wait a minute. We're letting everybody capitalize on US but US.' That inspired me to have a store where we can identify with ourselves," Gwen said.

If Gwen is the driving force behind Nika's, then her mother, Juanita, is the driving force behind Gwen. The relationship between Gwen and Juanita stems from motherland practices, Gwen said.

"The African tradition is the we look after our elders," Gwen said. "My mother is my rock and my best friend."

Juanita Walker also calls their relationship "best friends. I taught Gwen everything that I learned. I tried to instill in her morals and ambition. I know she's very determined," Juanita said.

Gwen and Juanita began making crafts together when Gwen was just a young girl. A God-given talent was revealed as she began making jewelry and other crafts at her mother's feet.

Gwen recalls that she once offered \$50 for a necklace she made from ordinary bones. She refused to sell it but her natural talent and creativity was exposed and has been escalating ever since.

The Walker's have been in business together since 1982. They have operated several businesses in Las Vegas including one of the first black-owned gift stores in a local airport.

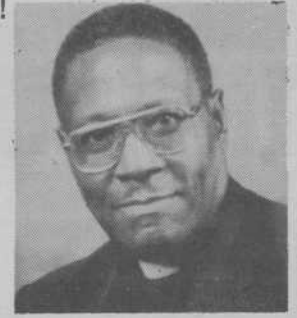
Now the Walker's are back in West Las Vegas with Nika's. They had several goals in mind when developing the plan to open the gift shop: Providing West Las Vegas with a store that catered to their heritage, helping to revamp and restore pride in the community, and training young people in retail.

Nika's is located at 705 West Van Buren. For more information call 647-2242.

THE NAACP AND YOU!



Rev. Jesse D. Scott
President
Las Vegas, NAACP



NAACP OBSERVES JUBILEE DAY

The Las Vegas Branch NAACP will observe Jubilee Day Sunday, January 10, 1993 - 3:00 p.m. at Zion United Methodist Church, 2108 Revere Street No, Las Vegas Nevada.

Music will be presented by Zion United Methodist and Grace Immanuel Baptist Church choirs. The Principal speaker will be Judge Lee Gates.

The Public is invited to attend.

HISTORY

The concept of Jubilee is deeply rooted in the Judeo/Christian tradition, emanating from the 5th Century B.C. The words, "Jubilee Year" literally mean "Year of the Ram's." The Ram's Horn signifies great sanctity and supernatural effect.

Jubilee Year, in ancient times was the final cycle of fifty years, consisting of seven Sabbatical Year periods, or forty-nine years, plus the fiftieth year. The Jubilee Year served two functions:

1. The automatic release or emancipating of a Jew, who for one reason or another had at some moment within the preceding forty-nine years become enslaved to a fellow Jew; and

2. The automatic release or return to the original owner of his family property, whether fields or houses in unwallled—i.e., country-towns which had been sold to a fellow Jew during the course of a similar forty-nine year period.

RELEVANCE FOR 1993

This great concept of release, freedom, or emancipation has been appropriated by Blacks since the historical signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln, January 1, 1863. The first crucial victory for the North in the battle against the South was the Battle of Antietam. On September 14, 1862, General G.B. McClellan of the North, stopped General R.E. Lee at Antietam. This was the victory the North has needed before Lincoln would announce on September 22, 1862 that if the states in rebellion did not return to the Union by January 1, 1863, he would declare their slaves to be "forever free." The South rejected the idea. So on New Year's Day, 1863, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

There is yet another powerful symbolism is the celebration of Jubilee Day by Branches of the Association" The Passover Feast. In the biblical history of Israel, the miraculous escape of the Hebrew Children from the bondage of slavery under the Egyptian Pharaoh finds strong parallels in the "escape" from slavery of Blacks in America. After a series of awful plagues, Pharaoh finally relents and "lets the children of Israel go" free. He is finally convinced when the Death Angel "passes-over" Egypt, sparing only those houses with the blood of the lamb painted on the lintel of the door. Those houses not painted with blood, saw their first-born struck dead.

The old black slave identified strongly with this biblical account

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A SPECIAL THANKS

The West Las Vegas Library and KCFB Radio extends their warmest thanks and gratitude to the Las Vegas community for your support of the Christmas Tree of Hope. You made it possible for nearly 200 children to have a Happy and Merry Christmas.

It is because of people like you that make this yearly event a success.

Thank you, may God bless you and yours this year.
Sincerely,

The West Las Vegas Library and KCFB Radio

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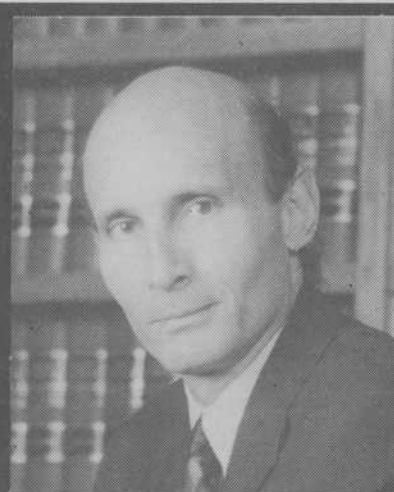
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