

# ENTERTAINMENT

## Ebony Etchings, etc.

### "WORKING TO MAKE THINGS BETTER IN THE HOOD..."

Edwin "Lucius" Bell is not just one of the many nitery owners in Tinseltown who lives the good life from owning and operating a favorite neighborhood watering spot.

He is however an African-American businessman who in addition to holding on to a business and fighting the odds to survive in a neighborhood that's on a downward slide, is genuinely concerned with the welfare and safety of folks and businesses in the community that surrounds his business, "Charlie's Live" on Florence.

The steady decay of the neighborhood and the increase of gangs, gang related crimes, drug sales and use, and drive-by shootings have greatly affected his business and the entire neighborhood. Sadly enough, it was a drive-by shooting that killed his son last year as he stood in the parking lot outside his fathers place of business after finishing his shift.

Losing business and losing a son would have made a lot of people pack up and run. But not Lucius and Charlie (who the nitery is name after); the tragic death of their son and the steady loss of business make them all the more determined to stay and make things better on their corner in the 'hood', plus have their efforts serve as a living memorial for him.

After all, "Charlie's Live" on Florence over the years, had provided employment and a showcase stage for aspiring neighborhood dancers, spent advertising dollars with various neighborhood newspapers, made donations to many a worthy community cause, and was definitely one of "Tinseltown's" popular gathering places for its patrons. It was also a known fact that Lucius and Charlie had helped many a down and out persons over the years.

For all the good that "Charlie's Live" on Florence had done in

the inner city community since opening their doors, now the odds seemingly were against them. Slowly and surely the increase of gangs and gang related crimes started a decaying process in the neighborhood where "Charlie's Live" was located, and more than half the businesses that at one time flourished all along Florence Avenue had closed up, or moved away. Little by little, more and more of the regular patrons stopped dropping in to mix and mingle and have a drink or two, and his cash registers didn't ring as often as they once did.

Hiring security men to patrol his parking lot and escort ladies to their cars didn't seem to help some of his customers feel any safer in the area, or encourage them to hang out at "Charlie's Live" like they used to do, prior to the neighborhood going down.

As a businessman fighting to hang on to the remains of his business plus survive in a neighborhood in need of revitalization, or as father who still grieves over the tragic loss of a son, and as a citizen who's tired of seeing policeman hanging tags on the toes of shooting victims on Florence Avenue, he knew he had to try and do something to salvage his business and help

make the community a better place.

He became a self appointed committee of one, and started reaching out to others. He directed his one man campaign at other business owners on Florence Avenue, encouraging them to stay and help rebuild the community. His fatherly conversations with youngsters in the community is aimed at getting them to do something positive in the neighborhood instead of being a part of the destructive forces wrecking the community; and seemingly his one man campaign is catching on!!

However, he is keenly aware that it's definitely going to take much more than his one on one campaign and convincing conversations with other African American business owners and neighborhood gang members to completely turn the neighborhood around. He also points out the need for neighborhood youngsters to have jobs that pay them decent salaries, build or provide gyms and recreation centers that youngsters can go to, instead of hanging out on street corners where the temptation to do something wrong is ever present.

He is also hoping that he can encourage other African American businessmen and women, community organizations and civic leaders to come together and take a serious stand to promote the preservation and support of black owned community businesses, plus develop solutions to increase the safety and welfare of community life in inner-city communities of Los Angeles.

He strongly believes that if enough seriously concerned African American people in any given neighborhood got together to initiate a working community program aimed at making things in their own neighborhoods better, they would certainly be in a much stronger position to demand and receive federal, state and city funding, support and assistance, to bring about positive and productive changes in any given inner city neighborhood.

## SENTINEL-VOICE TOP 10 SINGLES

- 1.) BUMP & GRIND (Remix) - R. Kelly
- 2.) ANYTHING - SWV
- 3.) AND OUR FEELINGS - Babyface
- 4.) MY LOVE - Mary J. Blige
- 5.) YOU KNOW HOW WE DO - Ice Cube
- 6.) YOUR BODY'S CALLING - R. Kelly
- 7.) YOU MEAN THE WORLD - Toni Braxton
- 8.) GOT ME WAITING - Heavy D
- 9.) LOOK INTO YOUR HEART - Whitney Houston
- 10.) WILLING TO FORGIVE - Aretha Franklin



TONI BRAXTON

**1st Week At #1:** BUMP & GRIND (Remix) - R. Kelly  
**PICK HIT OF THE WEEK:** I WISH - Gabrielle  
**TOP JAZZ CATS FROM THE CAT HIMSELF:** 1. Fourplay - Between The Sheets 2. Bob James - Restless 3. George Jinda & World News - Reliable Sources 4. Marcus Miller - The Sun Don't Lie 5. Humberto Ramirez - Aspects 6. Lee Ritenour - Wes Bound 7. Stanley Jordan - Bolero 8. Living Mirrors - In The Heart Of The Stone 9. The Brew - In The Beginning 10. Jazzmasters - The Jazzmasters.  
**CAT'S EYE:** Solsonics - Chrysalis, MJQ - Atlantic Jazz.  
 Don't forget **NIGHT TRACKS** with Cat Daddy from 8 p.m. to midnight Monday through Wednesday for easy listening R&B and jazz.

Top 10 compiled by Darnell 2 Short Brown

Let's hear it for Edwin "Lucius" Bell, who is really trying hard to make thing better in his part of the hood...and that's Hollywood this time!! Until the next time Lanier.

## NEW BOOK CELEBRATES AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY VALUES

House of Nia pleased to announce the publication of its newest release Values of the African American Family written by the prize-winning poet and activist, Johnnierenee Nelson. Values of the African American Family is a rich and eloquent collection of poetry, proverbs and praises-ongs. It is the fourth book in a series by Ms. Nelson which pays homage to the African American holiday Kwanzaa through exploration of the progressive and true meanings of its seven principles, the Nguzo Saba. Ms. Nelson's first book, A Quest for Kwanzaa was heralded as the authoritative genesis of Kwanzaa literature. It was soon followed by two more volumes.

Positive Passage: Everyday Kwanzaa Poems and Kwanzaa Love. The fact that the Black Family is a viable institution and still the most potent, vibrant and essential support system in the African American community is a fact Ms. Nelson attributes to the value system African American Families embrace-values rooted in their African heritage. Included in Values of the African American Family are such poems as "Why We Pour the Libation", "Family Reunion", "Call to Unity", and "The Indomitable Spirit of the African American Family".

The current dysfunctional and disintegrating models of the black family promoted by the media, academia, Hollywood, and television are "dimages" Values of the African American Family works to dispel by focusing upon the strengths and virtues of the contemporary black family. This book is a testament to its resiliency and viability.

Values of the African American Family is a spiritually nurturing work for all ages. The book is currently available for \$9 from the publisher: House of Nia, 4014 Calmoor St. National City, Ca, 91950. It is also available from the following distributors: Baker and Taylor \* Inland Book Company \* Pacific Pipeline and BookPeople.

VERY NECESSARY 12 PLAY



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