

New alliance offers youth hope

By Nancy Watson
Sentinel-Voice

You want to get involved and give back to the community, but when you seek a place to give your time and energy, you realize that you don't quite fit in with the group.

The group has its own agenda, philosophy or theology. It may be an older, established organization and just a little staid. Or it may require that you collect money for charity, but its administration receives fat paychecks and lives far better than you do. You realize that you'll be collecting money for them, not for the poor.

You may find an organization that fights drug use, but it seems to deal with the issue in a very superficial way.

You may look around and discover there's an organization that is actually paid by the government to do what you want to do, but it isn't doing much of anything.

You begin to feel disenchanting, isolated and don't really know where to give your talents and time. It seems as if everything is covered, but no one is really doing a good job. You look around again and still see children who are in need and you're at a loss as to what to do.

You fight apathy. You don't want to align yourself with an organization you can't respect and yet, those that you do respect aren't receiving the funding, staffing, materials or support they

need and they need so much you are again, at loss as to what you can do.

Nevada Youth Alliance (NYA) offers an alternative.

NYA is a simple concept with a simple goal. There's no dues, no monthly meetings, no grandstanding, no posturing. Just a simple mission statement and simple effective communication that has made NYA a network of more than 100 people working on some of the problems young people face in the Las Vegas Valley.

The group's mission is to ensure the success of youth and young people through a statewide atmosphere of nurturing and mentoring by providing a collaborative community effort.

NYA is a loose, yet tightly-knit network of people connected by e-mail, fax machines and, in two weeks, a World Wide Web page which will list all of the states resources for children and young adults.

Osman said, NYA offers a "safe haven or neutral ground" where adults and youth who want to volunteer can participate without having to identify with a specific ideology or philosophy.

"Nevada Youth Alliance is a neutral ground where we can be who we are and where we are and have that individuality protected. We feel comfortable bringing up new ideas, having different thoughts and viewpoints and creatively

discussing an issue," Osman said.

"No one will say, 'Oh, that's not part of our faith,' or 'that's not part of this political party,' or 'that conflicts with our agenda,'" Osman said.

He describes NYA as a "human movement" of people committed to Nevada's youth. "We may not always agree, but we're kindred spirits regarding where humanity is going."

And where humanity is going depends on how well we prepare our youth to take over for us which is why nurturing and mentoring youth and young adults is the mission of the NYA, Osman said.

"We have to prepare our youth and support them and then 'let them go,'" Osman said.

But first they have to be included in any plans made for them. Planning a program for youth and not including them in the planning is showing them disrespect, he said.

"After all, we're trying to create a better alliance with our kids," he said.

Osman loves to tell of a meeting where adults and teens were sitting around a boardroom table. After a lengthy discussion, one of the young men spoke up and told the adults they were talking about youth without including the youth sitting right among them.

This is just the sort of come uppance that delights Osman. First, the youth felt safe enough
(See Osman, Page 16)



David Osman is busy encouraging Las Vegas youth.
Photo by Savoy LVS/Voice

National leaders honor Percy E. Sutton

Special to Sentinel-Voice

When the Black Leadership Forum, Inc. (BLF) launches the first Awards Gala in its 19-year history on April 10, 1997 at New York City's Tavern On The Green, honoree Percy E. Sutton will receive BLF's First Annual Lamplighter Award for Leadership.

BLF Chairman Joseph E. Lowery, president of SCLC, will be assisted by the gala's National Honorary Co-Chairs Coretta Scott King and Louis Gossett, Jr., in making the presentation to Sutton. In addition to Lowery, most of

the high-profile black organizational presidents and CEOs, who make up BLF's Board of Directors, expect to be joined at the Gala by hundreds of top leaders and luminaries from national corporations and businesses, and from the civil rights, service, advocacy and entertainment communities.

Sutton, who served as the first African-American President of the Borough of Manhattan, will be cited for his accomplishments as a businessman, communications industry mogul, attorney, civil

rights leader and activist. During the 1960s he organized and led Freedom Rides, sit-ins, demonstrations and protests to challenge opponents of civil rights and equity for blacks.

For over 40 years, Sutton has practiced law in the U.S. and the Virgin Islands, representing and advising such national figures as 1984 and 1988 Presidential candidate Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

Percy Sutton is the founder and Chairman Emeritus of the Inner-City Broadcasting Corporation. He also is Chairman of Queens Inner-City Cable System (QUICS) and of Africom Telecommunications, Inc., an African-based satellite company promoting telephone service to the African continent. He was the force behind restoring the Apollo Theater in Harlem, where he currently promotes new talent and produces the famous live televised "Show Time At the Apollo."

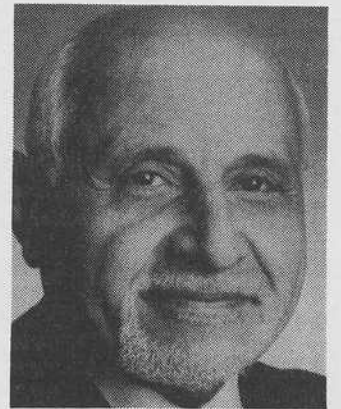
In the international arena, Sutton was a delegate, along with other nationally recognized business leaders, to the G-7 Nations, Ministers and

Leading Industrialists Roundtable on Telecommunications in Brussels, Belgium.

The Black Leadership Forum was founded in 1978 by 11 Black leaders including Rev. Lowery and Mrs. King; Vernon Jordan, then head of the National Urban League; Dr. Dorothy I. Height, of the National Council of Negro Women and several black elected officials and leaders of other advocacy organizations. Today, BLF consists of top leadership from 21 organizations, and "...provides creative and coordinated black leadership, diverse in membership but clear on its priority to empower African Americans to improve their

own lives and to expand their opportunities to fully participate in American social, economic and political life."

During the past year, BLF's agenda has included negotiations with Texaco, and dialogues with Eddie Bauer, Inc. and several other corporations confronting problems of access and diversity; monitoring and intervening to assure black representation in the Clinton administration; public education on proposals for Welfare Reform; involvement in voter education about California's Proposition 209 and also in assessing the process of disclosure regarding reported illegal drug trafficking



PERRY SUTTON

in that state.

The April 10th First Annual Lamplighter Awards Gala will launch a new BLF initiative to recognize, support, identify and assist in the advancement of new generations of black leaders, into and within public and private institutions. Gala entertainment will be provided by the Sherry Winston Band.

Nevada Power changes meter reading schedule

Special to the Sentinel-Voice
Effective April 1, Nevada Power Company begin changing the dates its customers' meter are read.

All 56 of the company's meter readers will now read meters in specific geographers area each day, rather than scattering throughout the community on a daily basis. This streamlined process will allow the company to

maximize its resources, operate more efficiently and better plan for future growth.

"We would like to thank customers for working with Nevada Power Company during this transition period," Cindy Gilliam, vice president of Retail-Customer Services, said. "Because March and April are typically months of low kilowatt-hour usage for our customers, this time was selected to make the change."

"We will be glad to extend special payment arrangements to any customers for whom this change creates a hardship."

The change may initially impact the number of days in the billing period. Customers may also receive two bills in April; one for service during March, the other for April. Each bill will have the due date clearly indicated and will

reflect charges for only those kilowatt-hours used for the specified period.

During the transition in April, some customers may receive an estimated bill to accommodate the changes in the meter reading schedule. If a customer's account has been estimated, a message in the lower right-hand corner will read, "estimated due to re-route."

All customers' May billings will be based on the actual meter reading for that month, and corrections for any estimated in April will be reflected on the May billing.

Customers with questions should contact Nevada Power Company at 367-5555, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Customer service representatives are easiest to reach after 1 p.m.



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